BHARATIYA VIDYA BHAVAN'S

HISTORY AND CULTURE OF THE INDIAN PEOPLE

VOLUME IX

BRITISH PARAMOUNTCY
AND
INDIAN RENAISSANCE

PART I

THE HISTORY AND CULTURE OF THE INDIAN PEOPLE

BRITISH PARAMOUNTCY AND INDIAN RENAISSANCE

PART I

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ABBREVIATIONS

Normally, the name or title of the author has been used as abbreviation for his book, included in either General Bibliography or Bibliography to the relevant Chapter. When more than one book is listed under one author, the Roman figure after his name or title denotes the serial number of the entry. Absence of any such figure denotes the first book, if there is more than one. When more than one author has the same surname, it denotes the first entry under that surname, initials being added to the rest. Thus Dutt-I denotes the first book mentioned against Dutt, Romesh, or Romesh Dutt.

Additional abbreviations are noted below:

ADV	*An Advanced History of India, by R. C. Majumdar, H. C. Raychaudhuri, and Kalikinkar Datta.*
AS	*Anderson and Subedar, The Last Days of the John Company.*
Bengal Celebrities	*A General Biography of Bengal Celebrities both Living and Dead, by Ramgopal Sanyal, 1889.*
CHBFP	*The Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy*
CHI	*The Cambridge History of India.*
Congress	*Congress in Evolution, by D. Chakrabarty and C. Bhattacharya Calcutta, 1935.*
CR	*Calcutta Review.*
CRO	*Commonwealth Relations Office (formerly India Office) Library, London.*
Dacoitee	*Dacoittee in Excelsis or the Spoliation of Oude (Anonymous, no date)*
DG	*District Gazetteer.*
Freedom-Assam	*Landmarks of the Freedom Struggle in Assam, by K N. Dutt.*
Freedom-Bihar	*History of the Freedom Movement in Bihar, Vol. I. by K. K. Datta.*
Freedom-Bombay	*Source Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India (collected from Bombay Government Records), 1957.*
Freedom-Hyderabad	*The Freedom Struggle in Hyderabad, published by the Hyderabad State Committee. 1956.*
Freedom-U.P.	*Freedom Struggle in Uttar Pradesh, 1957. Published by the Government of Uttar Pradesh*
Hist. Congr.	*History of the Indian National Congress, by Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramaya. Official Publication of the Congress.*
Hume	*Allan Octavian Hume, by Sir William Wedderburn.*
ICD	*Indian Constitutional Documents, by Panchanan Das Mukerji. 1915.*
ICND	*Landmarks in Indian Constitutional and National Development, by Gurmukh Nihal Singh 1933.*
IHQ	*Indian Historical Quarterly*
Imp. Gaz.	*Imperial Gazetteer.*

JIH	*Journal of Indian History.*
MH	*The Marquess of Hastings, by Major Ross of Bladensburg (RI).*
Montford Report	*Report on Indian Constitutional Reforms, by E. S. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford.*
MR	*Modern Review.*
MS. L	*Kaye's Mutiny Papers preserved in CRO, London.*
Mukerjees	*See books under Professor Haridas Mukherjee and Professor Mrs. Uma Mukherjee.*
Muslim League	*The Muslim League, by Lal Bahadur. Agra, 1954.*
Narrative	*(For full name and description, see p. 523).*
PHE	*Political History of England, Vol. XII.*
PIHRC	*Proceedings of the Indian Historical Records Commission.*
Rammohun Roy	*Rammohun Roy—The Man and His Work. Compiled and Edited by Amal Home and published under the auspices of the Rammohun Roy Centenary Committee. Calcutta, 1933*
RI	*Rulers of India Series. A personal name followed by RI indicates the biography of the person in this series.*
RPD	*India today, by R. Palme Dutt. Bombay, 1947*
SB	*See Chaudhuri, S. B. in the Bibliography*
Private Corres-pondence.	*See Book No. II under Ganda Singh*
SAK	*Syud Ahmed Khan, An Essay on the Causes of the Indian Revolt Translated by Captain W N. Lees. Calcutta, 1860*
Sed Com. Rep.	*Report of the Sedition Committee presided over by Mr Justice Rowlatt. 1918.*
Sel. Cal Gaz	*Selections from Calcutta Gazette, Vol. VI, entitled The Days of John Company, compiled by Anil Chandra Das Gupta.*
Siege	*History of the Siege of Delhi, by an officer who served there. Edinburgh, 1861*
Singh	*Ganda Singh-I.*
Sketches	*Sketches of Rulers of India, Vol. III, by G. D. Oswell.*
Sources	*Sources of Indian Tradition, compiled by Columbia University Press 1958*
TB	*Trial of Muhammad Bahadur Shah (Selections from the Records of the Government of the Punjab). 1870*
THG	*Rise and Fulfilment of British Rule in India, by Edward Thompson and G. T. Garratt (original edition).*
THG²	*Reprint of THG in 1958.*
Warner	*The Life of Marquis of Dalhousie, by Sir William Lee-Warner, London, 1904*

For special abbreviations used in the footnotes of Chapter XXVII, cf. the Bibliography of that Chapter.

PREFACE

By Dr R C. Majumdar

GENERAL EDITOR

Volumes IX and X deal with the history of India from 1818 to 1905 These two dates are significant landmarks in the history of Modern India. The establishment of British paramountcy in India was completed in 1818, and the year 1905 marks the beginning of that national struggle by the Indians against the British rule which culminated in the achievement of independence in 1947. This volume describes the nature of British rule in India for nearly a century after it had become the dominant political power, and the next volume delineates the social changes and cultural renaissance which led to the emergence of India from the Medieval to the Modern Age, and set in motion those forces and tendencies which created the Indian nation out of heterogeneous groups of peoples It is hardly necessary to point out that the events described in these two volumes are inextricably mixed up, and they should be looked upon as parts of a single work describing the different aspects of the history of India during the nineteenth century As a matter of fact, when the plan for the *History and Culture of the Indian People* was first drawn up in 1945, only a single volume, namely Vol IX was designed to cover all the topics which are now treated in Vols IX and X.

Vol. IX is divided into two Books which deal, respectively, with the political and economic history of the period The political history is again divided into three parts, the second part dealing with the mutiny and revolt of 1857-8. and the other two with the periods before and after it

The political history has been designed to be not a mere chronicle of events, but a broad review of the British rule bringing out its two main characteristics, namely, the establishment of paramount authority all over India, and the creation of a framework of an all-India administration on a solid basis, such as India has probably never known, save under the Maurya and the Mughul Emperors. It also seeks to draw, in true colour the colonial imperialism of Britain which forms the real background of British rule in India in the nineteenth century. It omits the meticulous details which are more suitable for a chronicle or a Gazetteer, and avoids, as far as possible emphasis on personalities.—Governors-General military comman-

ders and high Civil Officials—whose individual activities loom large in the current histories of British India.

The materials for writing the history of India in the 19th century are both ample and varied in character. Apart from numerous printed books, pamphlets and periodicals, the very nature of the British Government in India has been of great help to the historians in this respect. Being merely a subordinate body to the superior authority—East India Company up to 1858 and the British Crown thereafter—residing in England, almost every transaction of any importance had to be put on record for the examination by the latter, and there was a continuous stream of correspondence, both official and private, between the two. It has furnished invaluable source-materials, such as has been seldom the good luck of a historian to possess. The confidential minutes and despatches of the Governors-General and the Court of Directors or Secretary of State, as well as private correspondence between them, have thrown very interesting light on the inner motives that inspired the British policy and activities in India. They have also supplied positive evidence as to the real nature of many aspects of British imperialism, and thrown off the mask of benevolence under which it was successfully hidden for a long time As more and more of these records are gradually being thrown open to the public, the historian has been in a position to re-arrange the different elements of British policy in India properly in order to draw up an integrated picture of the British rule in India in the 19th century.

A very valuable supplement to these private and confidential official documents is supplied by the speeches and writings of a few liberal-minded Englishmen who felt real sympathy for Indian aspirations. The adverse comments on the various aspects of British rule in India by Englishmen like George Thompson, John Bright, Henry Fawcett, Sir Charles Digby, Wyndham and Sir Henry Cotton cannot be lightly dismissed as irresponsible criticism dictated by selfish motives, sense of frustration, or an anti-British spirit—insinuations such as are usually made in regard to any unfavourable criticism of British rule by even the highest Indian The adverse comments on British rule in India by the Britishers themselves are therefore of inestimable value to a historian, when they lend support to Indian criticism which would, otherwise, not carry much weight, having emanated from an interested party with natural repugnance against the British

The historian of British India has therefore no complaint about lack of materials,—he rather suffers from a plethora of them. It is impossible for a single individual, however industrious he might be,

to peruse all the available records of the 19th century. All that he can hope to do is to go through a judicious selection of them, and utilize the monographs written on various aspects of British administration by specialists who based their work on a minute and critical study of all relevant documents on the subject. There are many valuable works of this nature, but they are unequal in value and need to be studied with care. For, generally speaking, both British and Indian writers were, more or less, influenced by personal feelings and prejudices, and few could rise above them in order to produce a real objective study.

There are a number of important historical works of a general nature covering the whole or parts of the 19th century, written by contemporary Englishmen. The earliest work relating to the period under review is H. H. Wilson's Supplement, in three volumes, to the six-volume History of James Mill. This Supplement continues the history of British India from 1805 to 1835 Next comes Thornton's six-volume *History of the British Empire in India*, covering the period up to nearly 1845 when the last volume was published. Two other less voluminous works are Beveridge's *Comprehensive History of India* in three volumes, published in 1867 and Trotter's *History of the British Empire in India* (1844-58), published in 1866. These were not followed by any such comprehensive history written by a Britisher for more than half a century It is not a little curious, that although a great deal of fresh materials became available as the years rolled on, no British historian felt inclined to follow in the footsteps of his illustrious predecessors mentioned above, and write a comprehensive history of the glorious achievements of his country in a far distant land Instead, we find only a small number of short treatises of the nature of advanced text-books, written by Meadows Taylor (1870), Sir Alfred Lyall (1894), V. A. Smith (1919) P E Roberts (1921), and Thompson and Garratt (1934). But scholarly books were written on select topics, primarily with a view to defend British officials and British policy in India against charges levelled by older writers, including English historians. In general, the historical writings of Englishmen from about the last quarter of the 19th century were, more or less, tinged by the spirit of imperialism which they inherited as a legacy from the British rule in India during the preceding century The most typical example of such a historical work is furnished by V. A. Smith's *Oxford History of India* (1919) on a smaller scale, and *The Cambridge History of India,* Vols V(1929) and VI(1932), on a more comprehensive scale One may be pardoned for gathering the impression from these books, that they were products of men who honestly believed in the doctrine,—'my country,

right or wrong,'—and used the medium of history to defend British imperialism which had by that time come in for a good deal of criticism both in India and abroad. *The Cambridge History of India*, Vols. V-VI, the last great historical work on modern India written by British historians, looks at India purely from the standpoint of British officials and statesmen Its attention was mainly directed to, and its interest was primarily concerned with, the British dominion and British administration While minute details are given on these points, the story of Indians, as such, is almost completely ignored One may go through the two ponderous volumes without gaining any idea of the great cultural renaissance in India in the 19th century which transformed her from the Medieval to the Modern Age. While reference is made in detail to official transactions or administrative machinery, there is hardly any reference, except by way of casual mention as a part of administrative history, to the great social and religious reforms, literary revival, and political aspirations, which so strongly marked the 19th century. One comes across enthusiastic references to British Governors-General Governors and even lesser officials, but looks in vain for the names and careers of men like Rammohan Roy, Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, Bankim Chandra Chatterji, Ramkrishna Paramahamsa, Keshab Chandra Sen, Swami Vivekananda, Dayananda Saraswati, Surendra Nath Banerji, M G. Ranade, Dadabhai Naoroji, Pherozeshah Mehta, Bal Gangadhar Tilak and a host of others,* who will be remembered as makers of Modern India, long after the names of officials, with whose careers the two volumes of *Cambridge History* abound, have been completely forgotten

But the errors of *Cambridge History* are not of omission only. The errors of commission are equally, if not more grave and serious Differing in spirit even from the old English historians of British India, it has put forth only the official or imperial view of British transactions in India, without any attempt to discuss the dissentient views. It suppresses truth in many cases where the preservation of good name for the British rulers requires it; worse still, it repeats the official calumny against Indian rulers concocted by the British Government of the day in order to justify their unjust action against them, though a little inquiry would have sufficed to demonstrate the totally unreliable character of the evidence on which the statements of the Government of India were based Typical instances of the former are supplied by the accounts given of the annexation of Burma, Awadh, Nagpur, Jhansi, Sindh and the Panjāb, as well as dealings of Ellenborough with Sindhia. As regards the latter, it

* Only a casual mention is made of a few of them in connection with the story of British administration.

is only necessary to refer to the grounds on which the rulers of Mysore, Coorg, Cachar, and Satara were dethroned, and an armed expedition was sent against Manipur and its Commander-in-chief, Tikendrajit, was hanged.

There was no dearth of Indian historians, and it may be asked why they did not expose the true character of the history of modern India written by the Britishers. This was not only an academic question, but should have been prompted by a sense of patriotic duty when it was clearly realized that the British version was being gradually accepted, at least in most cases, as unvarnished truth. Without making any attempt to defend the Indian historians against this charge, it is only fair to state that they were working under a serious handicap in this respect during the British rule in India. It may be easily understood why no Indian historian during this period dared discuss feely and in detail, either the shady transactions of the British in respect of the princes and people of India, or the ignoble selfish motives which inspired the Government of India in different spheres of activities In particular, no adequate reference could be made to the iniquities, injustice and oppression perpetrated by the British in India. These difficulties were removed with the extinction of the British rule, but another difficulty presented itself The current books on the history of India under the British, written by English historians since 1870, were mostly influenced by the spirit of jingoism which looked at every event through official eyes and from the standpoint of the imperial interests of the British. There was, besides the over-powering sense of racial superiority which made even some eminent Englishmen, including Governors-General and British Cabinet ministers, look upon the Indians as little better than animals or primitive savages It is therefore scarcely a matter of surprise that the British historians would give a picture of Indian history, during the British rule, which suffered to a very large degree from distortion and suppression of truth, biassed judgment, and wrong inference, wherever the British prestige was likely to be damaged by a narration of actual events.** Unfortunately, many

** Two modern British historians of India, while admitting the truth of this charge, have offered an explanation which may be stated in their own words: "Of general histories of British India, those written a century or more ago are, with hardly an exception, franker, fuller, and more interesting than those of the last fifty years In days when no one dreamed that any one would ever be seditious enough to ask really fundamental questions (such as 'What right have you to be in India at all'), and when no one ever thought of any public but a British one, criticism was lively and well informed, judgment was passed without regard to political exigencies Of late years, increasingly and no doubt naturally, all Indian questions have tended to be approached from the standpoint of administration: 'Will this make for easier and quieter government?' The writer of to-day inevitably has a world outside his own people, listening intently and as touchy as his own people, as swift to take offence 'He that is not for us is against us' This knowledge of an overhearing, even eavesdropping public, of being *in partibus infidelium*, exer-

statements of these later British historians, owing to constant repetitions over a long period of time, have *now* come to be regarded as true, even though earlier British historians gave an altogether different version which approximated more nearly to truth, and expressed different views which were fairer and more reasonable.

A modern historian of British India, therefore, finds it absolutely necessary to dispose of a large legacy of falsehood, half-truths, and perversion of facts and judgments, which are now passing current as history. To expose their true nature and seek to establish truth on the basis of facts and reason, is by no means an easy task. A simple statement of facts, where it differs from the current view, is not likely to be accorded any historical value unless elaborate evidences and arguments are added to demolish the views or theories that have been in vogue for a long time. This renders the task of writing history of Modern India a very difficult and laborious one. As the present volume is the first comprehensive history of British India, written after the end of British rule, the onerous duty of setting an example of writing the history of Modern India, free from all restraints and strictly from historical point of view alone, devolves upon the editor of this volume. Such a history should seek to establish truth by removing the cobwebs of falsehoods, prejudices and misrepresentations that have gathered round it. This paramount task has always been kept in view, though, in practice, it led to disproportionate allotment of space and emphasis to different topics, judged purely from their intrinsic importance in a general history of India. For example, thirty-three pages have been devoted to the British invasion of the petty Manipur State, though it does not form a very important event in a general history of India. But the treatment of this episode by the British (and following them, Indian) historians has generally been so perverse and misleading, that real truth had to be established on a sound basis which would carry conviction against long-established tradition Ellenborough has been praised for his moderation in dealing with Sindhia, but the truth is just the reverse His action was most autocratic and tyrannical. A British historian has represented the last ruler of Coorg as almost a monster in the guise of human form, in order to justify the annexation of his territory, but this is contradicted by all available evidence, and there are grounds to believe that Coorg was annexed on account of its coffee-plantation and a climate suitable for the British. The dethronement of the Raja of Satara, though supported by the British historians, was undoubtedly an unjust and high-

cises a constant silent censorship, which has made British-Indian history the worst patch in current scholarship" Edward Thompson and G Garrat, *Rise and Fulfilment of British Rule in India* Bibliographical Note at the end of the book (Macmillan, 1934).

handed act. A simple denial of the statements of British writers which have gained currency as truths, or a short accurate statement of the actual case would not serve any useful purpose, as they would be attributed to the bias or prejudice of an Indian writer. It was, therefore, felt necessary to discuss each of these episodes fully on its merits by citing material evidence, and this has required much greater space than would possibly be given to it on the ground of its intrinsic importance to India.

Two other topics may be cited among those which would perhaps be regarded as occupying a space somewhat out of proportion to their importance in a general history. These are the famines and wars. The recurring famines in the 19th century constitute the blackest spot in the history of the British rule in India, and most severely affected that section of the people—the dumb millions—whom Lord Curzon and others repeatedly declared to be the real people of India, and of whose material interests they claimed to be the sole guardian The British politicians and rulers declared *ad nauseam* that the chief concern and object of their rule in India was to secure the material prosperity of that section, heedless of the hostile comments of the educated Indians who formed but a microscopic minority. The extreme poverty and misery of the masses was due to heavy assessment of land-revenue and the ruin of industry brought about by unfair means on the part of the British and their unwillingness to help or foster its growth The recurring famines, which were the inevitable consequences of the British policy, expose the real character of the paternal solicitude for the peasantry or dumb millions on the part of their self-constituted trustees or guardians The famine and land-revenue system have been treated at some length because they go to the root of the vital problem of the welfare of the masses—the *raison d'etre* of the British rule according to its supporters.

It has been the general attitude of the British historians to look upon the growth and expansion of British empire in India as an accident rather than the result of a deliberate policy or design. They hold that the wars by which new territories were gained were forced upon them, and were not due to any aggressive or imperial policy of expansion. The wars in the Panjab, Sindh, and Burma have been dealt in some detail in order to expose the unreal character of these pretensions. These wars were prompted by the deliberate policy of expansion, and the two wars against Afghanistan were the direct consequence of British imperialism.

Another topic which has occupied considerable space is the great outbreak of 1857. It is one of those episodes which no educated

Indian or student of Indian History has ever regarded without interest, and few without prejudice. Its memory served as an inspiration to the Indians in their fight for freedom against the British in the twentieth century, and consequently an exaggerated idea of its importance and an emotional view of its real character gained currency among all classes of Indians. It was hailed as the first national war of independence against the British, and this aspect was emphasized during the celebration of its centenary all over India. Much has been written on this question on that occasion, and both before and since, by professional historians as well as amateur writers who were mainly prompted by patriotic sentiments. No general consensus of opinion has yet emerged about the real nature or true character of the movement, but, on the whole, the tendency to look upon it as a national war of independence shows visible signs of decline Although big historical texts and numerous monographs on the subject have been published during the last hundred years, it has not yet been adequately treated in any general history of India Except a single book of small size, there is no monograph or special history of the Mutiny of 1857, which gives even a brief but systematic account of the outbreak of civil population in various localities in 1857-8 Yet this is a very important factor in making a proper estimate of the character of the movement. In view of the great importance which every educated Indian attaches to it, the editor has felt it necessary not only to add a detailed account of the local outbreaks, apart from the mutiny of sepoys, but also to discuss the causes and nature of the whole outbreak and describe in some detail the atrocities perpetrated by both sides,—information which is generally lacking in a general history of India

Another topic which is generally ignored, or has received but scant attention so far in a general history of India, is the series of violent outbreaks of armed resistance to the British authority which occurred frequently before the great outbreak of 1857, and also at greater intervals, after it was suppressed The pre-Mutiny outbreaks have greater significance They showed that the embers of the chaos and anarchy of the eighteenth century—when India was under free lance—had not died out, and proved to be but isolated manifestations of the old spirit which burst out in a concentrated fury in 1857. They also indicate the process and stages in the evolution of *Pax Britannica* which was gradually established in the second half of the nineteenth century. The disturbances before 1857 have therefore been collectively described, in some detail, in Chapter XIV. The disturbances after 1858 were more sporadic in character, but none the less of great significance, as they show that under the calm, placid surface of *Pax Britannica* there were violent

eddies which marked the suppressed wrath and discontent against the British rule These have been discussed in Chapter XXIX

Special mention may be made of two of these violent outbreaks, whose roots lay deep in the soil long before 1857. The first is the Wahabi Movement which is remarkable for two reasons It was the first national movement of the Muslims to restore their lost power and glory, and it evolved a highly developed organization, extending from the foothills of the Hindu Kush in the north-west, right across the plains of North India, to the eastern border of Bengal The Wahabis offered a stiff armed resistance to the British, and deeds of bravery, heroism and sacrifice displayed by individual members are worthy of being recorded in the ånnals of India.

The second is the organized resistance of the poor cultivators to the indigo-planters The story of the merciless exploitation and ruthless oppression of the peasants by the British planters in Bengal, and to a certain extent also in Bihar, forms one of the most dismal and disgraceful episodes in the history of British India But the tyranny of the white indigo-planters, backed by the British officials, and sometimes even by the Government, provoked a strange reaction—a resolute determination on the part of the cultivators not to sow indigo, come what may. This organized passive resistance which brought the issue to a successful end, may be justly regarded as the forerunner of the non-violent non-co-operation or passive resistance which Mahatma Gandhi launched on a massive scale more than half a century later to free India from the British rule.

The third remarkable episode is the attempt of Vasudeo Balwant Phadke to overthrow the British Government with the help of a secret organization. This underground movement did not achieve any success, but is very significant as the forerunner of what was known as the "terrorist" movement in Bengal in the first decade of the twentieth century.

These as well as the agrarian riots form important episodes in the history of British India, from Indian point of view, but hardly any attention has hitherto been paid to them even in the comprehensive Cambridge History of India (Vol. VI). It has therefore been necessary to refer to them in some detail in order to convey their real significance.

The General Editor felt the need of describing these and other topics in detail in order to establish the real facts and demolish the false notions still current about them. It has, however, led to a change in the entire plan of this series of Indian history, so far as the last two volumes are concerned. In 1945, when the plan of this history was finalized, a single volume was thought sufficient for the

delineation of the political history and cultural renaissance of the nineteenth century. It has now been necessary to devote two volumes to the same topics, as mentioned above. In order to emphasize that these two volumes really deal with only the different aspects of one and the same subject, the Table of Contents in each gives a complete list of chapters in the two Volumes, arranged in consecutive order.

Not only the plan, but the method of execution has also undergone a considerable change. It will strike even a casual reader, that whereas the previous volumes of this series have been the joint product of a large number of contributors, the editor himself is the author of almost all the chapters of Vol. IX, with the exception of five chapters on economic history (XXXIV—XXXVIII), parts of the two chapters on Administrative Organization (XII, XXVIII), the section on the Wahabi Movement (XXIX), and the chapter on Indian States (XXX).

This new 'method' was suggested by two considerations. In the first place, the editor, while engaged in writing the history of the freedom movement in India, on behalf of the Board of Editors appointed by the Government of India, realized, as the result of an intensive study of more than two years, the shortcomings of the current text books on the history of the British rule in India, although there were enough materials, even outside the Archives, for a proper treatment of the subject from a detached standpoint. He became painfully conscious of the necessity, after the achievement of independence, of approaching the subject from an altogether new point of view, untramelled by the traditions and conventions that gathered round the history of British India during the nineteenth century. He also keenly felt the responsibility lying upon an Indian editor of the first comprehensive history of India during the nineteenth century written after the achievement of independence. He had the onerous duty as well as the proud privilege of a pioneer to lay down a plan and establish a standard which, with all its defects and shortcomings, might help to form a secure foundation for others to build upon in future.

While overwhelmed with the responsibility of this task, the editor found to his dismay, that of the contributors, originally fixed up on the plan of 1945, many did not respond to his invitation to write, and a few, who did, wrote in the old traditional manner of pre-independence days, which was not in keeping with the new ideal or standard referred to above. Besides, it became apparent that there was a sort of unity underlying the whole history of the nineteenth century which must be conceived as an integrated whole

and therefore interpreted from a single standpoint. If different contributors write different chapters there is the great danger of differences and contradictions, explicit or implict, which would destroy the integrated picture, or damage it irretrievably. The editor therefore decided that he himself would write most of the chapters with the few exceptions noted above. But the co-operative principle, followed in the preceding volumes, was not altogether given up. The editor utilized the writings of eminent specialists in different aspects of Indian history, and adopted their mature views wherever he found them reasonable. This explains the extensive quotations from the writings of Romesh Dutt, Kaye, B. Mazumdar, P. Mukherjee, Ganda Singh and many others which lie scattered throughout the work.

It might appear strange to many that the editor, whose studies were hitherto confined to the ancient period of Indian history, should now take up the writing of modern Indian history. The task was, however, thrust upon him when, early in 1953, he undertook to write the history of the freedom movement in India, on behalf of the Board of Editors set up by the Government of India for the purpose. Though the Board was dissolved in 1955, the work remained unfinished and the editor completed the work, in his personal capacity, during the last six years. The study of the modern period of Indian history, which the work involved, for a total period of nine years emboldened the editor to undertake the gigantic task of writing, almost unaided, the history of India from 1818 to 1947, of which the first period up to 1905 is dealt with in this and the next volume It need hardly be stressed that much of what is contained in these two and Volume XI covers the same ground as his forthcoming *History of the Freedom Movement* mentioned above * The vexed problem of the great outbreak of 1857-58 formed the subject-matter of the editor's book, *The Sepoy Mutiny and Revolt of 1857*, published in 1957,** and the Cultural Renaissance in the nineteenth century was treated by him in a recent publication, *Glimpses of Bengal in the Nineteenth Century* These three books and several articles on the subject have been a sort of preparation for Vols. IX, X and XI, and have been freely utilized in all these volumes.

The editor does not claim any credit for original research, his main interest being concentrated on the proper presentation of historical truth, on the basis of facts already known and published, and a correct interpretation of them without being influenced in any

* As a matter of fact, Vols IX, X, and XI of this series and the three volumes of *The History of the Freedom Movement in India* by the editor of this series (of which the first volume will shortly be out) have many things in common, and these two series may be regarded as complementary to each other.

** A revised edition is in the press.

way by the long-standing notions, conventions or traditions. In order to form correct opinions and judgments, he has tried to ascertain contemporary views of an impartial character. For views unfavourable to any group or community he has cited evidence, as far as possible, of distinguished persons belonging to that group or community, for *prima facie* they are not likely to cherish any bias or prejudice against their own kith and kin. Wherever available, views of committees, appointed to inquire into any specific case, have been cited in preference to views of individuals, unless they happened to occupy a high and distinguished position or status. As stated above, the editor's task has been to collect information already known, rather than to discover new facts, and to pass judgments on the basis of available evidence, after taking due note of the views previously held on the subject.

Nevertheless, the editor feels that Vols. IX and X would throw fresh light on a few points on the basis of records, either unpublished or not generally known. As instances in Vol. IX, may be cited the documents from National Archives at Delhi concerning Sikkim (pp. 1067 ff.) and Manipur (pp. 709 ff.). The Wahabi Movement has been described in detail, and its real nature and importance brought out, probably for the first time, with the help of original documents. not utilized so far A number of records, not generally known, have formed the basis of the chapter on Indian States (Chapter XXX). The five chapters on the economic condition (Chapters XXXIV-XXXVIII) are principally based on original records. As regards the outbreak of 1857, also, the letters of Bahadur Shah and his family, the Rani of Jhansi, and Nana Sahib, published for the first time by the editor in his book on the Sepoy Mutiny, have thrown a flood of light on the nature of the outbreak and of the leading personalities that guided it.

Views, radically different from those generally current today, have been expressed on a variety of topics, notably the British transactions in regard to Afghanistan, Burma, Awadh, Assam, Satara, and the Panjāb. But these are mostly based on the works of various specialists who have carried on research on these topics The editor has tried to maintain the principle of co-operative work followed in earlier volumes by freely using their works to which detailed reference has been given in the footnotes. The editor has treated these scholars, as if they were asked to write the chapters on topics in which they have specialised The editor has tried to give full reference to the writings on which he has relied, and hopes to be excused for any error of omission or commission in this respect, due to inadvertence.

The editor begs to draw the attention of the readers to his observations on pp. xxix to xxxii of Vol. VI of this series, on some peculiar difficulties. The present volume, as well as the next two, is subject, in a far greater degree, to the same difficulty and inconvenience of dealing with the topics which form live issues even today. The relation between the Englishmen and the Indians, and between the Hindus and the Muslims, cannot but form important episodes in the history of modern India. Yet, it is difficult to believe, that any English, Hindu, or Muslim historian could really approach the subject in a purely detached spirit. The editor has nothing to add to what has been said on p. xxix of Vol. VI in regard to Hindu-Muslim relation. Vols. IX, X, and XI, however, have also to deal with another subject, no less delicate, namely Indo-British relations. Although the British have set the example, almost unique in the history of the world, of relinquishing the sovereignty over a large country without any fight, the foreign rule of a century and a half, and the struggle for independence extending over nearly half that period, inevitably embittered the relations between the ruler and the ruled, and generated passions and prejudices which die hard. Both the Indian and British historians have therefore the same difficulty in writing the history of the period through which they themselves have lived, or the effects of which they have personally experienced. The editor has been a witness to the grim struggle for independence which began with the partition of Bengal in 1905 and continued till the achievement of independence in 1947. He does not pretend to have been a dispassionate or disinterested spectator; he would have been more or less than a human being if he were so His views and judgments of the English may, therefore, have been influenced by passions or prejudices to a certain extent. Without denying this possibility, the editor claims that he has tried his best to take a detached view of men and things—a task somewhat facilitated by lapse of time. How far this claim is justified, *future* generations of readers alone would be in a position to judge.

The editor begs to draw the attention of the readers to the policy adopted by him in this series and enunciated in the preface of Vol VI in the following words·

"It would be the endeavour of the present editor to follow the three fundamental principles enunciated above· firstly, that history is no respecter of persons or communities, secondly, that its sole aim is to find out the truth by following the canons commonly accepted as sound by all historians; and thirdly, to express the truth without fear, envy, malice, passion, or prejudice, and irrespective of all extraneous considerations, both political and humane. In judging

any remark or opinion expressed in such a history, the question to be asked is not whether it is pleasant or unpleasant, mild or strong, impolitic or imprudent, but simply whether it is true or false, just or unjust, and above all, whether it is or is not supported by evidence at our disposal."

After having stated the general policy and principles, it is necessary to refer to some important changes in the original plan and programme of this series, other than those indicated above in respect of Vols. IX and X. In the first place, these two volumes appear before the publication of Vols. VII and VIII. This is mainly due to the increased interest, now felt all over India, in the history of the British rule in this country. For the same reason the next volume—Vol XI—, dealing with the period from the beginning of the *Swadeshi* movement in Bengal in 1905 to the achievement of independence in 1947, will also be published before Vols. VII and VIII. Of course, this change of procedure will be noticeable only during the next three or four years, for Vols. VII and VIII are likely to be published by the end of that period, and then the reader will have the whole series before him without any break.

Another noticeable change is the general absence of diacritical marks in writing the names of Indian persons and places. Though these marks were used in some cases, specially in the earlier parts, the editor found it difficult to maintain uniformity of any kind and finally gave up the attempt in despair. The name of Surendra Nath Banerji, for example, is written in English in no less than four or five different ways. The Punjab, the official spelling, has been mostly superseded by the more rational form Panjāb. Diacritical marks have also been avoided for the reason that they would appear very incongruous to readers in cases of well-known Indian names of modern age.

The editor notes with deep regret the death of Mr. N. B. Ray who wrote a section of Chapter X in Vol. VI, and places on record his appreciation of the work of Mr. Ray as a historian of the Medieval Age.

Dr. A. D. Pusalker was unable to continue for long his work as Assistant Editor on account of troubles in the eye. So, Dr. A. K. Majumdar continued to work as Assistant Editor, and during his stay in U K, the work was taken up by Dr. D. K. Ghose. The editor takes this opportunity to thank both of them for their valued assistance and co-operation, and Prof. Sachchidananda Bhattacharya for

correcting proofs during their absence. The editor also begs to convey his thanks to the contributors to this volume for their sincere cooperation.

In conclusion, it may be stated that Vol X, the next Volume, is expected to be published in 1963.

CHAPTER I

SUCCESSION OF GOVERNORS-GENERAL

The brilliant administration of Marquess of Hastings came to a sad end, owing to the unfortunate controversy over the transactions of William Palmer and Co. in Hyderābād. This firm advanced huge loans to Chandu Lal who, in concert with the Resident, exercised the real authority in the Nizam's dominions. Under an Act of Parliament passed in 1797 such loans were made illegal, unless advanced with the previous written permission of the Court of Directors or of one of the Governors in Council in India. Apprehending that their previous loans might be invalidated by this Act the firm covered them by a fresh loan of sixty lakhs of Rupees This new loan was represented to be necessary for improving the finances of the State and received the sanction of the Governor-General in Council. But it transpired later that "there had been no real advance and the loan was nothing more than the transfer of a previous debt to a new account."[1] The sanction of the Government had thus been obtained by false pretences. Several factors in this transaction touched the Governor-General personally. The proposal for sanctioning the loan was carried in the Council by the casting vote of the Governor-General. The wife of a leading member of the firm of William Palmer and Co. had been brought up by Marquess of Hastings in his family and loved like a daughter. These naturally gave rise to insinuations about the personal integrity of the Governor-General, though there are good grounds to believe that he was guilty of no more serious crime than lack of proper caution and an error of judgement. In any event the Court of Directors strongly disapproved of the whole of the transaction, and asked the Government of India to revoke their sanction and not to help the firm in enforcing their claim. These instructions, particularly the suspicion cast on his honour, which some expressions in them seemed to imply, mortified Marquess of Hastings. He resigned the office of Governor-General in 1821 and left India on January 9, 1823.

The Court of Directors and Proprietors jointly passed a vote of thanks to him for his able administration, but a motion for the award of a pecuniary grant was not carried. Later, after all the relevant papers were circulated, a meeting of the General Court "while admitting that the purity of his motives could not be impeached," "approved of certain despatches in which the Directors strongly censured the countenance" given to the firm of William Palmer and Co.[2]

On the resignation of Marquess of Hastings, Mr. Canning, a notable figure in British politics, was appointed his successor. Canning accepted the appointment, but changed his mind on the sudden death of Marquess of Londonderry as this unexpected event opened to him the possibility of becoming the Foreign Secretary. Lord Amherst was then selected as the successor of Marquess of Hastings, and he joined his post on August 1, 1823, Mr. Adam, the second member of the Council, having officiated during the interval.

The chief event during the period of Amherst's office was the First Burmese War (1824-26). Among others may be mentioned the mutiny of troops at Barrackpur, the rebellion at Bharatpur, treaty with Nagpur, acquisition of territories in Malay Peninsula, and treaty with Siam.

In March 1828 Lord Amherst left India, and Mr. Butterworth Bayley officiated as Governor-General. Lord William Cavendish-Bentinck, who succeeded Amherst, was the second son of Duke of Portland He began his life as a soldier, and took part in the Napoleonic wars. In 1803 he was appointed Governor of Madras, but the Court of Directors disapproved of his conduct in connection with the mutiny at Vellore in 1806, and he was recalled in 1807

After his return, Bentinck resumed his military career and took an active part in the Peninsular War. In 1811, he was appointed Commander of the English troops in Sicily, and fought with the French in Italy. On his return he entered the Parliament and was offered the Goverorship of Madras in 1819, which he declined. But in 1822 when the return of the Marquess of Hastings was announced, he made "a representation of his claims to be nominated his successor"[3] A hostile critic has condemned it as "the unusual step of offering himself as a candidate."[4] But as Bentick himself put it, he was prompted by the idea that his selection as Governor-General would be a gratifying vindication of his conduct in 1806. He was, not, however, successful in his endeavour. But when Lord Amherst retired he was appointed to succeed him and joined his post on July 4, 1828.

The most memorable event during the administration of Bentinck was the renewal of the Charter of the East India Company in 1833, and the consequent changes both in its character and the method of administration of its Indian territories. His rule was distinguished by social and educational reforms of a far-reaching character, in particular the suppression of the *sati* and the official adoption of western education for India. Among his most important administrative measures may be mentioned the suppression of the *thugee*, the systematic appointment of Indians in administrative

offices which were hitherto reserved exclusively for Englishmen, and the restoration of financial stability by curtailing expenditure, both civil and military. The reduction of *Batta* (extra allowance to military officers), which caused a saving of £20,000, caused a great commotion, and "during the whole controversy (1828-30) the Calcutta Press teemed with personal attacks on him, often of abusive nature." In his relations with Indian States, Bentinck followed the traditional imperial policy, and his annexation of Cachār and Coorg, and taking over the administration of Mysore can only be regarded as high-handed acts inspired by an aggressive expansionist policy.

Widely divergent opinions have been held of the ability of Lord Bentinck and the success of his administration. High encomiums have been paid on him by Macaulay and these found an echo in the hearts of the Indians. But contemporary Anglo-Indians, particularly the official world, held a very poor opinion of his ability and character The historian Thornton even proceeded so far as to remark that but for the indulgence in a variety of whimsical or inconsiderate acts which did him little credit, "the administration of Lord William Bentinck would appear almost a blank, and were all record of it obliterated, posterity would scarcely observe the deficiency, while it is certain they would have little reason to regret it."[5] He makes only a single exception, namely the abolition of *Sati*.

Early in 1835, Bentinck tendered resignation of his office and Sir Charles Metcalfe, a distinguished official in India, was selected by the Court of Directors to succeed him, as a provisional measure. But this was objected to by the British ministry on two grounds. First, that a permanent successor should be appointed without delay, and secondly, that in their opinion 'the highest office in the Government of India should not be held by any servant of the Company, however eminent his knowledge, talents and experiences might be;—it should be always filled from England in order to maintain the one main link between the systems of the British and Indian governments'. The Court of Directors thereupon selected Lord Heytesbury, and the appointment was immediately approved by the crown. But shortly after Lord Heytesbury was sworn into office, there was a change of ministry in Britain, and the Whig party came into power. Palmerston, the Foreign Secretary, was an inveterate Russophobe and did not like Heytesbury who had been an ambassador at St. Petersburg, and was an ardent admirer of the Tsar Nicholas. At Palmerston's instigation the Cabinet advised His Majesty to revoke the appointment, and postponed the question till the arrival of Lord William Bentinck.[6] The Court of Directors strongly remonstrated against this measure which, in effect, rendered

the appointment of Governor-General a matter of party politics. The question was also debated in the House of Commons, but the ministers did not yield their ground.

Lord William Bentinck left India on March 20, 1835, and Sir Charles Metcalfe succeeded him by virtue of his provisional appointment. His brief tenure of office for one year has been rendered memorable by the new press law which removed the restrictions to which the public press in India was subjected.

In the meantime Lord Auckland was appointed to succeed Bentinck George Eden, Earl of Auckland, second son of the first Baron, had a distinguished Parliamentary career. He held the two posts of President of the Board of Trade and Master of the Mint in 1830-34, and became the First Lord of the Admiralty on the reconstitution of the Whig ministry in 1834.

He took over charge as Governor-General on March 5, 1836. The tenure of his office is marked by the First Afghān War which caused the greatest misfortune that ever befell the British arms and dealt a severe blow to their prestige in India. This grim tragedy occurred on the eve of his retirement, and the post was offered to Lord Ellenborough. He was Lord Privy Seal (1828) and President of the Board of Control for India (1828-30) He became President of the Board of Control in 1841, when he was appointed Governor-General "to restore peace in Asia". He arrived at Calcutta on February 28, 1842, and Auckland, promoted to an Earldom for his initial success in the Afghān War, sailed for home on March 12.

Lord Ellenborough brought the Afghān War to an end after the honour and might of the British were vindicated by a successful expedition to Kābul His short regime was marked by two high-handed acts of injustice, namely, the annexation of Sindh and the coercion of Sindhia into a humiliating treaty. But he was not allowed to complete his term of office. The Court of Directors recalled him after two years,—the only instance of the exercise of a power vested in that body by the Act of 1784. Apart from his unjust annexation of Sindh and arbitrary coercive measures adopted towards Sindhia's Government, Ellenborough had irritated the Court of Directors by his other arbitrary acts and haughty, almost insolent, attitude towards them. He had dominated over them for many years as the President of the Board of Control, and could not adjust himself to his new position in which he was theoretically the servant of the body His reply to the criticism of his actions by the Court of Directors was not always couched in a language befitting his new office, though it must be admitted that in some matters, precipitating the crisis, he was undoubtedly within his rights. His refusal,

for instance, to admit the Law Member to the meetings of his Council which discussed purely executive and not legislative matters, was strictly in accordance with the letter of the law. There is perhaps some truth in his view that the Directors disliked him because he stood in the way of their patronage by way of appointments. In any case, the Court of Directors felt that Ellenborough was placing their authority at naught and setting up the powers and privileges of the Councils, and the Company's own servants, against their own power. So, in defiance of the Cabinet and express remonstrances of Sir Robert Peel and the Duke of Wellington, the Court of Directors unanimously passed a resolution on April 24, 1844, recalling Lord Ellenborough. In justification of their resolution they placed on record a comprehensive review of the whole administration of Lord Ellenborough, including his treatment of Sindh and Sindhia. But, as the Chairman of the Board of Directors admitted, the main ground of recall was "their desire of preserving their own authority". Ellenborough's recall was, therefore, due not so much to his iniquitous acts as to his defiance of the Court of Directors and the usurpation of what they conceived to be their rights and prerogatives.

The disgrace implied in the recall was, to some extent, counteracted by the vote of thanks passed by the House of Commons to the retiring Governor-General, though it was not without some opposition. Broad hints were also conveyed to the Directors that their crime would be punished by the curtailment of their rights at the next revision of their charter. In any event, the Directors climbed down and, to make amends, agreed to appoint as Ellenborough's successor his brother-in-law, Sir Henry Hardinge, who took charge from him towards the end of July, 1844 [7] Hardinge had distinguished himself as a military officer in the Peninsular War. In the final stages of the war against Napoleon in Belgium, he joined the Prussian army under Blucher as British Military Commissioner and lost his left hand at the battle of Ligny. The Duke of Wellington had presented the sword of the great Napoleon as a sword of honour to Hardinge. Hardinge had also a Parliamentary career extending over twenty years. The period of his rule in India is chiefly memorable for the First Sikh War. He took an active part in this campaign and while the critical battle was being fought at Ferozeshāh, he unbuckled Napoleon's sword which he had been wearing, and sent it to a place of safety in the rear, lest it should fall into the hands of the Sikhs. He introduced the principle of giving preference to English-educated Indians for public employment—a policy which gave great fillip to English education but changed its character.

The suppression of human sacrifice by the Khonds was his other great achievement.

Lord Hardinge left India in January 1848 after personally handing over charge to his distinguished successor, Lord Dalhousie, in Calcutta, on the 12th of that month The father of the new Governor-General was one of Wellington's Generals and had become Commander-in-Chief in India.

Lord Dalhousie entered Parliament in 1837 and succeeded Gladstone as President of the Board of Trade in 1845, in the second Peel Cabinet. After the resignation of Peel in 1846, the new Prime Minister Lord John Russell offered him a seat in the Cabinet, but Dalhousie declined it Next year, when he was merely thirty-five years of age, he was offered the post of Governor-General of India. He had to choose between a promising political career in Britain and the highest office in India. He accepted the latter on the understanding that he was to be left in "entire and unquestioned possession" of his own "personal independence with reference to party politics "[8]

The strong personality indicated by the above expression was manifest throughout his long career of eight years in India (1848-56) unusually crowded with big events When Dalhousie assumed his office he assured Sir John Hobhouse, the President of the Board of Control, that everything was quiet. Lord Hardinge, too, had remarked on the eve of his retirement, that so far as human foresight could predict, it would not be necessary to fire a gun in India for seven years. The English Press echoed the same view But before three months had elapsed Dalhousie was engaged in the Second Sikh War, perhaps the one most severely contested in the whole history of British India He was also involved in war with Sikim and Burma The result of the Sikh War was the annexation of the Punjāb Henceforth the annexation of native states seems to have been adopted as the guiding policy by the new Governor-General, who thus reverted to the principles of Marquess of Wellesley and Marquess of Hastings

No other single Governor-General of India added even half the extent of territories which were incorporated into the British dominions during the administration of Lord Dalhousie, and were nearly twice the area of England and Wales. Besides the Punjāb, Lower Burma and tracts of Sikim were conquered by arms, and the kingdom of Awadh (Oudh) was seized by mere threat, on the plea of misrule of its ruler Berār, at first held as a security for the regular payment of the British contingent in Hyderābād, was for all practical purposes annexed to the British dominions. In addition to these

the kingdoms of Nāgpur, Sātārā, Jhānsi and a number of minor States were annexed by the application of the Doctrine of Lapse, *i.e.*, due to the failure of male heirs, an adopted son not being recognized as such. Besides, Dalhousie abolished the titles of the Nawab of Carnatic and the Raja of Tānjore, and stopped the pensions of ex-Peshwa Baji Rao after his death.

But the annexations of territories, by which Dalhousie left to his successor "a country whose area was a third and a half larger than the country he had himself received charge of from his predecessor",[9] were not the only distinctive features of his administration. The improvements he effected in the internal administration of the large empire were many and varied in character. These would be referred to in detail in proper places. It would suffice here to mention only a few. The Governor-General was relieved of his additional but onerous duty of governing also the province of Bengal, which was in future to be ruled by a Lieutenant-Governor with his headquarters in Calcutta. This city still remained the imperial capital, but in view of the large accessions of territory it was decided to locate the imperial Government at Simla during a considerable part of the year, and also to remove the military headquarters from Calcutta to an inland station a thousand miles away. The introduction of the Railway and the Telegraph systems, along with cheap postage, revolutionised India in more senses than one. These, along with the creation of Public Works Department and the construction of many canals, including the great Ganges Canal, vigorous campaign of social reforms and organisation of education on the lines laid down in the famous despatch of 1854, must be reckoned as the great factors in the evolution of modern India.

The heavy burden of responsibility and enormous amount of work carried on during eight years of unremitting labour, amid domestic sorrows, completely broke down the health of Dalhousie. He came to India in the plenitude of his youthful vigour, but when he handed over charge to Lord Canning, he was, as he described himself, a "poor, miserable, broken down dying man." He set sail for England on March 6, 1856, and died on December 19, 1860.

Lord Canning, who succeeded Dalhousie, was the third son of William George Canning, a distinguished English statesman and Foreign Secretary who, as noted above, had accepted the office of Governor-General in 1823, but did not actually join his post. Lord Canning served as Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs and also obtained a seat in the Cabinet in Lord Palmerston's ministry (1855). Like Dalhousie, Canning sacrificed a promising political career in England by accepting the Governor-Generalship of India. Canning

reached India early in 1856, but as he halted at Bombay and Madras, he did not reach Calcutta and take over charge till the month of February.

As at the beginning of his predecessor's administration, everything in India seemed quiet But Dalhousie's experience had made him wiser, and in a narrative of his rule written later in life he had observed: "No prudent man would ever venture to predict unbroken tranquillity within the Eastern possessions of Great Britain." Canning also echoed the same feeling in a speech which he delivered at a farewell banquet given in his honour by the Court of Directors. "We must not forget," said he, "that in the sky of India, serene as it is, a small cloud may arise, at first no bigger than a man's hand, but which, growing bigger and bigger, may at last threaten to overwhelm us with ruin What has happened once may happen again." What exactly the Governor-General designate had in view, particularly in the last sentence, no one knows. Whether it was merely a premonition, psychological in character, or a shrewd anticipation of events, it is impossible to say. But Canning's words turned out to be a prophetic utterance, and have been quoted, ever since, more often than perhaps any other saying of any Governor-General. For, a little more than a year after Canning took over charge of his high office, the thunderstorm burst in the shape of the mutiny of sepoys which was soon widely spread and gradually merged itself into a popular revolt in certain areas, threatening to overwhelm the British dominions in India in utter ruin. That story will form the subject-matter of Part II.

Taking a broad view, the period of forty years (1818-1857) covered by these Governors-General must be regarded as one of great importance in the history of British rule in India. The British definitely assumed the powers and responsibilities of the paramount power and the first phase of British imperialism made itself fully manifest with all its good and evil characteristics So far as the Indians were concerned, they did not accept the new position without demur or expressions of discontent The chiefs and people of India chafed at the rigours of the new rule and regarded themselves as helpless victims of the iron yoke of the British. Nevertheless discontent sometimes led to armed resistance not unoften developing into open rebellions Although these were local or sectional risings, and there was no concerted plan of action, it would be a mistake to dismiss them as of no significance. They were the outward manifestations of a sullen spirit of resistance against a foreign rule and novel system of administration, and mark the tedious and painful stages through which the British Government had to pass before

they succeeded in establishing the *Pax-Britannica* in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Again, it is to be noted that these disturbances and risings set the stage for the great upheaval of 1857, which shook the mighty British Empire to its very foundation. With the failure of that rising, *but not till then*, did the Indians realise the futility of armed resistance against the British and accept their rule as a *fait accompli*. The period from 1818 to 1857 may thus be looked upon both as a culmination of the process that had set in with the Battle of Plassey in 1757 and a preparation for that unchallenged supremacy of the British which gave to India peace for a century known as *Pax Britannica*.

1. Beveridge, III. 123-4.
2. Ibid, 128.
3. *Bentinck* (R.I.), 53.
4. Thornton, V. 177.
5. Ibid, 234-6.
6. Thornton, VI. 22-3; *CHBFP*, II. 201.
7. Imlah, 224.
8. *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (11th Edition), p. 765.
9. Sketches, 21.

CHAPTER II

THE BRITISH PARAMOUNTCY AND IMPERIALISM

I. GENERAL REVIEW

The end of the Third Marāthā War constitutes a definite landmark in the history of the British rule in India. The kingdom of the head of the proud Marāthā nation was now a part of the British dominions, and the other Marāthā chiefs were humbled to the dust. There was no power in the whole of India, from the Himālayas to the Cape Comorin and the Sutlej to the Brahmputra, which could challenge the authority of the British.

The part England took in destroying the power of Napoleon gave her self-confidence and raised her prestige as a great military power of the world. It is not surprising therefore that the political outlook of the British in India also underwent a great transformation Hitherto they were engaged in the task of consolidating their rule; now they looked upon themselves as the Paramount Power in India. The Marquess of Hastings, whose achievements brought about this change, had a very clear conception of this new position and planned his activities accordingly. He himself enunciated the new policy in the following words:

"Our object ought to be to render the British Government paramount in effect, if not declaredly so. We should hold the other States as vassals, in substance though not in name; not precisely as they stood in the Mogul Government, but possessed of perfect internal sovereignty, and only bound to repay the guarantee and protection of their possessions by the British Government with the pledge of the two great feudal duties.[11]

"First, they should support it with all their forces on any call. Secondly, they should submit their mutual differences to the head of the confederacy (our Government), without attacking each other's territories, a few subordinate stipulations on our part, with immunities secured in return to the other side (especially with regard to succession), would render the arrangement ample without complication or undue latitude Were this made palatable to a few States, as perhaps it easily might, the abrogation of treaties with the Powers who refuse to submit to the arrangement would soon work upon their apprehensions in a way that would bring them at last within

the pale of the compact. The completion of such a system, which must include the extinction of any pretension to pre-eminence in the court of Delhi, demands time and favourable coincidences. While, on the other hand, the difficulties bequeathed to me are imminent, and might break upon me at any instant. A new Government always produces some suspension in animosities. I have endeavoured to improve the juncture by courteous and conciliatory language to the native Powers; and I do hope I may remove considerable soreness. As for the rest, fortune and opportunities must determine; but it is always well to ascertain to oneself what one would precisely desire had one the means of commanding the issue."[1]

Lord Hastings himself gave a practical demonstration of this new policy in his settlement with the Marāthā and Rājput States, to which reference will be made in the next section. His successors not only followed his policy but carried it to its logical conclusion. Between Paramountcy and aggressive Imperialism there is but a short step, and sometimes there is hardly any line of demarcation. So Paramountcy *cum* Imperialism was the key-note of British policy in India during the period under review.

The British historians and statesmen have given wide currency to the view that the establishment of the British empire in India was the effect of a number of unforeseen factors, and not the result of a policy of aggressive imperialism deliberately adopted by the authorities. This is only partially correct, but in view of its hold on the public mind it is necessary to review the question at some length.

As far back as 1784 the British House of Commons adopted a resolution to the effect that "to pursue schemes of conquest and extension of dominion in India is contrary to the wish, the honour, and policy of the British nation". But in spite of it the House of Commons accorded its sanction to the wars and conquests of Lord Cornwallis and Lord Wellesley. The Court of Directors, with the true instincts of a mercantile body, was more sincere in its desire to avoid further expansion of its Indian dominions. It opposed the expansionist policy of Wellesley, and for some time studiously avoided all political complications in India in spite of urgent remonstrances. It endorsed and reiterated the Resolution of the House of Commons with the following preamble: "The territories which we have lately acquired. . .are of so vast and extensive a nature that we cannot take a view of our situation without being seriously impressed with the wisdom and necessity of that solemn declaration of the legislature. . . ."[1a]

Among those who most vehemently denounced the conquests of Wellesley was the Earl of Moira, the future Marquess of Hastings.

When he accepted the office of the Governor-General he decided to follow the policy of peace without any reservation, and as he himself said, "in his original plan there had not been the expectation or the wish of adding a rood to the dominions of the Honourable Company" [2] But his views underwent a radical change after a few years' residence in India, and he adopted an out and out imperial outlook, as has been mentioned above. As usual, the Court of Directors censured the Governor-General, both for his military campaigns and the extension of territory, but were not prepared to forego the profits accruing therefrom.

The Marquess of Hastings was not, however, either the first or the last Governor-General who left the shore of England with an avowed determination to pursue a policy of peace, but was seriously engaged, while in India, in costly campaigns to further the imperial interest of the British Lord Ellenborough, for example, came out to India "to restore tranquillity to both banks of the Indus; in a word to give peace to Asia".[2a] But once in India, he proved himself to be one of the worst among the imperial autocrats, in his dealings with Sindh and Gwalior. Sir Henry Hardinge was chosen his successor with the strictest injunction to avoid war and, above all things, annexation. But he fought one of the bloodiest campaigns in India and, as will be shown later, it was certainly not a fight in self-defence as it is generally believed When Hardinge retired from India he declared that there would not be a shot fired for the next seven years [2b] But before a year was over, Lord Dalhousie fought another bloody war and pursued that policy of military conquest and annexation by all means which coloured red the whole map of India.

A perusal of the following pages will show that in almost all cases, the British Governors-General, including those mentioned above, were not forced by circumstances to pursue an aggressive imperial policy, but adopted it as a matter of choice, though in many cases it involved gross injustice and breach of pledges It would perhaps be unjust and unnatural to regard all the Governors-General as devoid of sense of justice and morality The real explanation of the strange phenomenon recorded above evidently lies in the political disintegration of India and the ease with which her different parts could be absorbed in the British Empire. India presented the spectacle of gardens full of ripe mangoes without any strong watchmen to protect them from intruders, and the Governors-General were overcome by the irresistible temptation to swallow them. It might be illegal, unjust and immoral, but may also be looked upon as a law of nature, howsoever undesirable its effect might be upon the owners of the gardens. The same idea has been put in a more precise scientific

form, and a British writer has put up the best defence of the action of his countrymen, in the following words:

"It is unavoidable not to recognise a law, like that which in Physics makes the greater attract and absorb the less, compelling the march of the energetic Saxon over and through the weak oriental mass. Acts of injustice, indeed, must not shield themselves under any such law, but practical sense will acknowledge its existence".[20]

Whatever we might think of this defence, it is difficult to endorse the view that the British empire in India was the result of a series of unforeseen accidents, and not the effect of any deliberate effort. The analogy of the mango garden gives us a clue to the real explanation. It may be true, to a certain extent, that the British did not come to India with a ready-made plan to rob the mango gardens, but it is equally true that the mangoes did not fall into their mouths, of themselves, directly from the trees; they had to pluck the fruits one by one, through ingenious devices backed by force, too strong for the helpless watchmen.

Thus, whatever might have been the views or desire of the home authorities, their pro-consuls deliberately dragged them on along the road which led to British imperialism in India. In the history of its progress the year 1818, as noted above, constitutes a definite landmark. The struggle for supremacy was over, and there was no Indian power which could question the authority of the British power or dare raise their voice or hands against it. Slowly but surely, the Government of India adjusted itself to the new position and realised its duties and responsibilities. But, as in the physical world, a force, once it gets a momentum, is apt to run its full course, so also in the political world the imperialistic idea, once set in motion, is hard to stop and often runs beyond the limit which prudence or justice might dictate. So it happened in India. The Government of India, in most cases without the knowledge or approval, and not in a few, in open defiance of the home authorities, pursued unchecked the policy of aggressive imperialism in all its naked brutality, under the thinly veiled disguise of the duty of a Paramount Power. The political history of India during the period under review is but the history of this imperialistic policy pursued by the British rulers in India. In some cases it may be accounted for, even justified, by the considerations of the duty and prerogative of Paramountcy; in others the unselfish character of the motive, as well as the justice of the course actually pursued, may be seriously doubted; and there are not a few which deserve serious condemnation as unprovoked aggression.

It appears that with the gradual expansion of the British empire in India and the material gains accruing therefrom, the views of the home authorities also underwent a radical change. In 1841 the Court of Directors laid down that the Company should "persevere in the one clear and direct course of abandoning no just and honourable accession of territory or revenue, while all existing claims of rights are at the same time scrupulously respected,"[3] a sentiment that was echoed by Dalhousie.[4] If it is remembered that the determination of "justice" or "rights" was necessarily left to the *ex parte* decision of the Paramount Power, the principle, enunciated above, practically gave a free rein to the galloping horse of British imperialism in India.

The imperialistic policy, broadly speaking, assumed two forms. First, the tightening of the hold over, leading sometimes to the annexation of, smaller States within the limits of the British empire in India; and secondly, the expansion of its frontier both towards the east as well as to the west, even beyond the natural boundaries of the country.

As regards the first, it was inevitable that there would be clashes between the Paramount Power and the subordinate States ruled over by Indians The inefficiency and curruption of many of these States sometimes brought about such chaos and confusion in the internal administration that the Paramount Power could hardly look on with indifference upon the miseries of the suffering subjects, or the reaction it was not unlikley to produce upon the neighbouring territories. On the other hand, temptation to extend authority or dominions on the pretext of misrule in Native States was too great not to profoundly influence the judgment or decision in many cases. It was in any case a difficult task to avoid the Scylla of *laissez faire* and the Charybdis of undue and unjust interference. The difficulty was further increased by the tacit assumption, gradually growing into a deep-rooted conviction in the minds of many Britishers, that British rule being hundred times preferable to a native rule, the extension of the former must be effected by all means, fair or foul, the end always justifying the means. This policy was buttressed by the specious plea that the people of the Native States themselves preferred the British rule. This might have been true in some cases, but in most cases where the plea was put forward, either as a cause, or as a justification, of the interference, it was demonstrated to be false by the subsequent conduct of the people themselves.

A definite change was noticeable in the attitude of the British rulers in India. While, previous to 1818, they were generally satisfied with the exercise of influence and suzerainty over the Native

States, they were gradually led to the idea of incorporating them in the British dominions. A pointed reference to this change is made by Sleeman in his letter to Sir James Hogg, as the following extract will show:

"Few old officers of experience, with my feelings and opinions on this subject, now remain in India; and the influence of.. a school ...characterised by impatience at the existence of any native state, and its strong and often insane advocacy of their absorption—by honest means, if possible—but still, their absorption...is too great over the rising generation, whose hopes and aspirations they tend so much to encourage. There is no pretext, however weak, that is not sufficient, in their estimation, for the purpose (of annexation); and no war, however cruel, that is not justifiable, if it has only this object in view."[5]

The *modus operandi* of the annexation of the Indian States is thus described by the Marquess of Hastings:

"In our treaties with them we recognise them as independent sovereigns. Then we send a Resident to their courts. Instead of acting in the character of ambassador, he assumes the functions of a dictator; interferes in all their private concerns; countenances refractory subjects against them; and makes the most ostentatious exhibition of this exercise of authority. To secure to himself the support of our Government, he urges some *interest* which, under the colour thrown upon it by him, is strenuously taken up by our Council; and the Government identifies itself with the Resident not only on the single point but on the whole tenor of his conduct. In nothing do we violate the feelings of the native princes so much as in the decisions which we claim the privilege of pronouncing with regard to the succession to the musnud. We constantly oppose our construction of Mahomedan law to the right which the Moslem princes claim from usage to choose among their sons the individual to be declared the heir apparent."[6] He might have well added Hindu Law in the same category.

The word 'interest' in the above extract deserves more than a passing notice. What type of interest the Marquess had in view it is difficult to say. But in practice, the climate, strategic position or commercial possibilities of a State or locality offered the strongest inducement to British officers to annex the territory to the British dominions.

In addition to the *modus operandi* described above there were many others, the most favourite ones being to paint an Indian ruler in the blackest colour, attributing to him all types of cruelty and

vices, or to charge him with intrigue against the British Government, sometimes with even treasonable plot to conquer British territories. There was almost no limit to such extravagant or ridiculous charges put forward for ousting an Indian ruler. Fortunately for historians there were not wanting a few honest British people who could rise above the petty meanness of officialdom and dare express the bare truth exposing the hollowness of these charges. The history of India owes a great deal to these noble men, for, but for their testimony, it would have been difficult to ascertain the truth, and the official version would have been taken as historical facts. What is still more important, their testimony furnishes the most irrefutable evidence about the generally unreliable character of the version, supplied by the Government of India, about their own iniquitous activities.

One of the underlying causes of interference, in not a few cases, was the conscious or unconscious desire to remove a strong personality from the helm of affairs in a Native State. A Paramount Power would naturally prefer only mediocrities who were more likely to be subservient to it. A preference for this class, and an aversion towards the other, explain many cases of interference in Native States. Indeed a British Minister openly declared in the House of Commons that the Government of India had never encouraged men of ability, good character and popularity to wield any power or authority in a Native State—they had always hated and discouraged independent and original talent, and had always loved and promoted docile and unpretending mediocrity. This was a policy, he continued, which they had inherited from Tarquinius Superbus. But times were changed. So, they did not cut off the heads of the tall poppies, as recommended by the Roman king, but took more merciful means of removing any person of dangerous political pre-eminence to a harmless condition.[7] Though this confession was made by an Under-Secretary of State for India towards the close of the period covered by this volume, there is no doubt that the policy was at work even at the very beginning. As will be shown in Ch. VI, Maharaja Pratap Singh of Sātārā was an early victim to it, but he was neither the first nor the last victim of this type during the British rule.

This naked spirit of aggression was sought to be hidden under a cloak of piety. The expansion of British dominions, in and outside India, was always represented as a measure which was urgently required for safeguarding the interests of Indian people, or forced upon the British by the contumacy, arrogance, or evil designs of the opponents. But in most cases, if not all, it would appear to be the result

of British imperialism masquerading in the guise of political necessity or injured innocence, and dictated by the interests of the British people rather than the Indians. The British rule in India has always been the rule of one people by another people and for another people.[8] The establishment of the British empire in India may have been fully justified by its results. This and the allied questions will be discussed elsewhere. But these speculations are beside the point in an objective study of the history of the British empire in India. It would be hard to maintain that the successive stages of its growth were always marked by political virtues, and dictated by an altruistic motive or benevolent spirit, as most Englishmen, historians included, would have us believe. The British empire in India rose and fell very much like all empires in ancient, medieval, and modern age, and if the method pursued can hardly claim any special virtue, it does not call for any special condemnation. These preliminary considerations would be of great help in forming a just and proper estimate of the history of the British empire in India which it is the object of this volume to unfold.

The new consciousness of the British Paramountcy in India was also manifested in the attitude of the Governors-General to the titular Emperor of Delhi. He had by this time lost all authority outside the precincts of his palace (Red Fort) in Delhi, but although the substance of his imperial authority was gone, the shadow still remained. It should be remembered that by the treaty of 1765 the East India Company held their possessions as the Diwan of the Emperor, and as this was not amended or modified by any subsequent treaty, the old fiction continued in so far as it was compatible with the actual state of affairs. The money coined by the Government of India still bore the effigy of the emperor of Delhi, and was "issued in the 9th regnal year of Shah Alam"! The British Resident at Delhi, on certain ceremonial occasions, presented him the usual *nazar* in the name of the Governor-General, and the Goveror-General's Seal bore a phrase declaring himself to be the servant of the Emperor. The Marquess of Hastings abolished both these practices as in pursuance of his imperial policy he found it necessary to 'extinguish the fiction of the Mogul government.'

This attitude of the Marquess is perhaps also to be explained by the change in the relations in which India stood with His Britannic Majesty. Although the British Parliament interfered in the affairs of the East India Company, the latter was still regarded as the sovereign of India, and a distinction was maintained between British subjects and Indians. It was not till 1813 that the British Government took advantage of the renewal of the Company's Char-

ter, to declare in unequivocal terms "the undoubted sovereignty of the crown of the United Kingdom" in and over the territorial possessions under the 'control' of the Company.

We need not enter into the legal quibble whether this clause in the Charter Act of 1813 automatically dissolved the status of the Company as Diwan of the Emperor of Delhi created by the treaty of 1765 The Marquess of Hastings, in any case, "denied that the Company held territory on this dependent tenure" and hence "held it right to discountenance any pretension of the sort (on the part of the house of Timur), either as it applies to us or to any of the native princes!"[9]

A practical demonstration of the new attitude was given by the Marquess in 1815 when he was touring near Delhi. It was suggested that he should pay a formal visit to the Emperor Akbar II who had succeeded his father Shah Alam in 1806 Hastings refused point blank because, as he says in his private journal, "His Majesty expected my acquiescence in a ceremonial which was to imply an acknowledgement that he was the liege-lord of the British possessions".

A further and more striking illustration of the Marquess' view, quoted above, is afforded by the change in the title of the ruler of Avadh. He was encouraged by the Governor-General to discard his old title of Wazir or chief minister (to the Mughul Emperor) and assume that of Pādshāh or independent king, in 1819 The Marquess of Hastings says that he "sanctioned the change" (euphemistic way of expressing that he instigated it) "on the ground that it would benefit British interests, by dividing the Muhammadans among themselves, and by weakening the moral power of the house of Timūr which nominally reigned at Delhi."[10] The Nizam, however, resisted a similar suggestion, as he regarded it as an act of rebellion against the Emperor

The refusal of the Marquess of Hastings to visit the Emperor of Delhi had the desired effect. The objectionable ceremonials were abolished and in 1827 Lord Amherst met Akbar II on equal terms at the Diwan-i-Khas within the Red Fort of Delhi. Amherst also introduced modification in the style of communication with the Emperor The old conventional form, conveying allegiance on the part of the Company was removed, though the new one, in a way, recognized the superiority of the Emperor. In 1835 the old coins were replaced by new ones bearing the name and image of the British sovereign

The Emperor Akbar II sent Rāmmohan Roy as an envoy to London to represent his grievances to the British King, George IV, and

seek redress. The principal items of complaint were the smallness of the annual stipend granted to him (12 lakhs of rupees), and the change in the ceremonials and forms of address introduced by Lord Amherst. The Emperor invested Rāmmohan with the title of 'Rājā', and sent a personal letter with him to the king of England. The Governor-General, Lord Bentinck, refused to recognize either the title or the character of envoy conferred upon Rāmmohan, and so the latter proceeded to England (November, 1830) as a "private individual". Nevertheless he circulated to influential Englishmen a printed statement corresponding in substance to the letter from the Emperor. As a result of the exertions of Rāmmohan, the Court of Directors increased the annual stipend of the Emperor by three lakhs of rupees (February 13, 1833), but the latter got no redress of the other grievances.

Even the additional stipend did not benefit the Emperor in the least. The Court of Directors, in their letter, dated 13 February, 1833, directed the Governor-General to raise the royal stipend to 15 lakhs of Rupees per annum, leaving it to him to distribute the additional amount of three lakhs among the other members of the imperial family in such manner as he thought just and proper upon a consideration of their respective claims. The Emperor of Delhi did not like this idea and at first declined, but later accepted, the additional grant. The scheme of distribution proposed by him was, however, thrown away, and he complained to the Governor-General that according to the distribution made by the Lieutenant-Governor of North-Western Provinces, "not a farthing (has been) reserved for me, my sons, nor their descendants". The Governor-General refused to interfere in the proposed distribution, and so the titular Emperor of Delhi did not get any part of the increased allowance of three lakhs.[10a]

As mentioned above, the practice of payment of the *nazar* by the Governor-General was abolished by the Marquess of Hastings. The Commander-in-Chief, however, paid the *nazar* as late as 1837, on the accession of Bahadur Shah. When Lord Ellenborough paid a visit to Delhi in 1842-3, his secretaries consulted the *darbār* records and followed the usual practice of presenting *nazar* without any reference to the Governor-General. The latter was surprised and indignant in the extreme, when he heard of this, and put a stop to the *nazar*-giving for ever. Mr. William Edwards, one of the secretaries, has left a graphic account of the ceremony of presenting "the last *nazar* to the king of Delhi". The following extract will give some idea of the ceremony destined to be the last of its kind.

"Mr. Thomason and myself, accompanied by Colonel Broadfoot, proceeded to the palace on elephants, each being provided with a silk bag full of gold *mohurs* for presentation to the King. We were required to proceed without any shoes into the immediate presence—such having been in all ages in India the usual mark of respect on the part of an inferior on approaching a superior. On this occasion we compromised the matter by putting short worsted Cashmere socks over our boots, and thus entered the hall of audience. On a curtain being drawn aside, we saw the old King, then apparently a very feeble old man above seventy years of age, seated on his throne, which was elevated so as to have the royal person, as he sat cross-legged, on a level with our faces. We made a low obeisance to the Emperor, and on approaching the throne, each in succession presented the bag of gold *mohurs*, and inquired after his Majesty's health and prosperity. I confess to a feeling of awe and solemnity passing over me as I stepped up and addressed this representative of a long line of kings and of a once powerful empire, and presented my *nuzzur* for his Majesty's acceptance,...The King simply received it, and ordered us to be robed in dresses of honour, and to have turbans bound round our heads. This was done in due form; we made our obeisance to the King, and departed."[10b]

The process of debunking the titular Emperor of Delhi went on apace, though at times the authorities at home had to curb the zeal of their pro-consuls in India. Ellenborough abolished the payment of *nazar*, both on his own behalf and on that of the Resident: but he did not succeed in carrying out his scheme whereby the Emperor would voluntarily (?) resign his title and quit the Red Fort in Delhi, and then the Chiefs of India would voluntarily (?) offer the imperial title to the Queen of England. Dalhousie, who abolished the title of 'Nawab of the Carnatic' and 'Raja of Tanjore', proposed that the imperial dignity and royal title should be abolished and the Red Fort should be vacated after the death of the Emperor Bahadur Shah II, who had succeeded his father Akbar II in 1837. Although the Court of Directors were strongly opposed to this view, they were forced to sanction it at the dictation of the President of the Board of Control. In view of the strong opposition at home, Dalhousie modified his plan, and a secret agreement was reached with the heir apparent, Prince Fakir-ud-din, by which the latter was to be recognized as the head of the family, on the death of his father, on condition that he would be satisfied with the title of mere Shahzada or Prince, agree to meet the Governor-General on equal terms, and vacate the Red Fort, taking his residence with his family somewhere near the Qutb Minar. The Prince evidently agreed because he feared, and rightly too, that his claim would be passed over by his father.

Unfortunately, nothing came out of it, as the Prince died before his father, in 1856. But the secret leaked out, and caused great resentment and mortification to the Emperor and his family. Further complication arose when Bahadur Shah nominated, as his heir, Jawan Bakht, a younger son by his favourite queen Zinnat Mahal, and, in spite of repeated requests of the Emperor, the Governor-General refused to recognize his nomination, or to increase his pension. Canning, who succeeded Dalhousie, reiterated his proposal to abolish the imperial dignity altogether. The home authorities agreed, and it was decided that the imperial dignity, descending in an unbroken line from Babur more than three hundred years ago, should end with the life of Bahadur Shah. But the question was decided long before that event and in a far more tragic manner. Bahadur Shah II was tried for the part he took in the mutiny of troops at Delhi in 1857 condemned, and exiled to Rangoon, and all pretension of the imperial dignity of the house of Tīmūr was extinguished for ever. The consummation of the efforts of successive Governors-General was reached when Queen Victoria was declared the Empress of India (Kaisar-i-Hind) on January 1, 1877. The credit for this crowning achievement, however, belongs to the two great imperialists, Lord Lytton and Benjamin Disraeli.

One of the earliest instances of the exercise of authority as Paramount Power by the British is furnished by the events in the State of Ālwār in 1824. Ahmad Buksh Khan, a soldier of fortune in the service of Ālwār, was rewarded for his help to the British during the Second Marāthā War with the principality of Firozpur under the supremacy of the British. An attempt was made to assassinate Ahmad Buksh. The assassin, when seized, confessed that he was employed by a minister and some influential members of the court of Ālwār. The British Government directed the Raja of Ālwār to arrest the accused persons and send them to Delhi for trial. The Raja did not comply with this request, and even rejected the proposal of a judicial investigation by British functionaries as incompatible with his rights as an independent prince. The Raja assembled an armed force, put the fortress of Ālwār in a state of defence, and opened negotiations with the rulers of Jaipur and Bharatpur, "in both of which, dissatisfaction with British policy was busily fermenting".[10] Nothing serious happened in Ālwār or Jaipur, but it was necessary to send a regular military expedition to Bharatpur to which reference will be made in Section III of this Chapter.

But while interference in Ālwār and Bharatpur may be regarded as beneficent aspects of Paramountcy, the worst features of Paramountcy *cum* Imperialism were manifested in the high-handed and

unjust action of Lord Ellenborough in his handling of the situation at Gwālior in 1843. The episode was much criticised at the time and formed one of the grounds for the recall of Ellenborough; but curiously enough, British historians have generally paid but scant attention to it, and represented the whole thing as mainly an act of rebellion on the part of the all-powerful but unruly troops of Sindhia. Nothing can be further from the truth. In reality, Ellenborough's act is a prominent illustration of the abuse of the newly assumed dignity of Paramountcy. A military expedition was undertaken by the Governor-General in person to coerce a ruler on the ground of his contumacy, though the latter had not violated a single provision of the treaty which regulated his relation with the Paramount power, and made humiliating submission even to the most unjust demands of the Governor-General. The pleas advanced by Ellenborough to justify the action he took reminds one of the Aesop's fable of the wolf and the lamb, and his arguments aptly illustrate the logic of the strong towards the weak. In order to demonstrate the true nature of the episode and remove the false impressions that have been created by current history, it has been necessary to discuss the question at some length which may appear to be somewhat out of proportion to the intrinsic importance of the subject. The elaborate and detailed account given in Ch. IX will show that the ostensible ground for the military expedition against Sindhia was a mere pretext to cover the real motive of removing a strong force close to Agra which might prove to be a great danger in the rear in the impending conflict with the powerful Sikh army of 70,000 men standing in a menacing attitude on the banks of the Sutlej.

Other concrete illustrations of the different phases of British imperialism are furnished by the military expedition to Afghānistān in 1839, described in section IV of this Chapter, and the annexations of various kingdoms, in and outside India, dealt with in the next two Chapters.

II SETTLEMENT OF THE MARQUESS OF HASTINGS.

A *Marāthā Dominions*

As a result of the Third Marāthā War in 1817-18, described in the preceding volume, the Peshwa, Baji Rao II, Appa Sahib, the Bhonsle chief of Nagpur, and Malhar Rao Holkar were all defeated by the British Baji Rao lost his throne and was exiled to Bithur, near Kānpur, on a pension His vast possessions were incorporated in the British dominions, with the exception of a small portion, which formed the Sātārā State, and two *parganas* granted to the

Raja of Kolhāpur. The post of Peshwa was abolished, and with it even the nominal symbol of the Marāthā sovereignty and unity was extinguished for ever.

Holkar concluded the treaty of Mandāsor on January 6, 1818, by which he accepted a British Resident at his Court, ceded all territories south of the Narmadā, gave up all claims of sovereignty in Rājputāna and other outlying territories, acknowledged the independence of the Pathan chief Amir Khan, reduced his own army, and agreed to maintain a contingent to co-operate with the British.

Appa Sahib, the Bhonsle chief of Nagpur, concluded a treaty on January 6, 1818, by which he ceded all territories lying to the north of the Narmadā, and was allowed to retain a nominal sovereignty over the rest of his kingdom. But as he once more began to intrigue with the Peshwa he was arrested and deposed. His escape and subsequent adventures have been noted above. A grandson of Raghuji Bhonsle was placed on the throne. But as he was a child, the administration was carried on by British officers under the supervision of the Resident, and Bhonsle's army was placed under British officers

In December, 1826, a treaty was concluded between the British Government and the Bhonsle chief of Nāgpur. By virtue of this new treaty, the English ceased to act as the guardian of the Raja and he was permitted to administer his own kingdom. By other provisions of this new treaty, the hills of Sitābaldi and the neighbourhood were annexed to the British Residency, and the British Government was entitled to garrison and occupy such forts and strong places as they might determine. The Bhonsle Raja gave up all connection with the other Marāthā rulers, including the Raja of Sātārā, and all pretensions and ceremonies associated with his former position in the Marāthā confederacy. His relations with foreign powers, as well as the strength of the force to be maintained by him, were to be regulated by the British. The Raja also formally gave up all his claims to the territory ceded to the Company by Appa Sahib by the treaty of 1818, the other provisions of which were all renewed as far as they were compatible with the preceding provisions.

Sindhia was forced, without any actual war, to conclude a treaty at Gwālior in November, 1817. He agreed to co-operate with the British in the campaign against the Pindāris, and also to cancel the clause in the treaty of Surji Arjungāon (A.D. 1803) by which the British were prevented from concluding alliance with Rājput and other chiefs. As Sindhia did not render the promised help in the Pindāri campaign he was forced to conclude another treaty in

1818 by which he ceded Ājmir to the British. As noted above, he was deprived of the fort of Āsirgadh in consequence of his duplicity.

The Gaekwar of Barodā had already entered into subsidiary alliance with the British in 1802,[12] and had been loyal and faithful to them ever since. The treaty concluded between the Peshwa and the British Government on June 13, 1817 contained some stipulations in his favour which increased his revenue to the extent of twenty-two lakhs of Rupees. In return the Gaekwar agreed, by a treaty in November, 1817, to increase the subsidiary force maintained by the British at his expense. As the Gaekwar, Anand Rao, was an imbecile, the administration was practically carried on by the British. On his death in 1819 he was succeeded by his brother Sayaji Rao, who concluded a new treaty with the British in 1820, by which the British control was relaxed a little and the Gaekwar's authority in the internal affairs was somewhat increased.

The dominions of the Peshwa, with the exception of those portions where native rulers were set up, were incorporated into the British empire and formed the major part of what now became the Presidency of Bombay. Elphinstone, who became its Governor in 1820, adopted wise measures in order to reconcile all classes of people to the new government and in this he was eminently successful.

Among the new Native States carved out of the Peshwa's dominions, the most important was that of Sātārā, where a descendant of Shivaji was placed on the throne with very limited powers. The circumstances under which Pratap Singh became the first ruler of Sātārā, and was later deposed on allegations, which appear to be unfounded to a very large extent, will be described in detail in Chapter VI.

The districts ceded by the Bhonsle in the valley of the Narmadā, hitherto ruled by various native chiefs, were placed under a Commissioner in 1818; in 1827 Sāgar was added to his jurisdiction, constituting the 'Sāgar and Narmadā' territories.

Like the Gaekwar of Barodā the Nizam of Hyderābād was also rewarded for his loyalty out of the spoils of the Third Marāthā War. He was relieved of the antiquated claim of *Chauth* made by the Peshwa which had been a perpetual source of dissensions and disputes. There was also an exchange of territories. The Nizam received certain districts ceded by the Bhonsle, the Peshwa, and the Holkar, which were contiguous to his territories, and gave up, in return, to the British territory of less value. By this exchange the Nizam's dominions were consolidated and the frontiers on the west more precisely defined.

B. *Rājput States*

The treaties with the Marāthā leaders freed the old States in Rājputāna from the control which the Sindhia and Holkar had exercised over them. This paved the way for a series of treaties concluded between the British and the various major and minor Rājput States which placed them under the protection of the Government of India, with rights and obligations, which continued, without much alteration, down to the end of British rule, one hundred and thirty years later. There can be no question that the Rājput rulers welcomed the British Protectorate. They had suffered so long and so severely from the depredations of the Sindhias and Holkars, as well as of the Pathan or Pindari hordes, that most of them were reduced to a state of utter exhaustion, and found no means to protect themselves without the aid of the British. The position was summed up by one of them as follows:—"Some power in India had always existed to which peaceable States submitted, and in return obtained its protection against the invasions of upstart chiefs and the armies of lawless banditti; that the British Government now occupied the place of that protecting Power and was the natural guardian of weak states, which were continually exposed to the cruelties and oppression of robbers and plunderers, owing to the refusal of the British Government to protect them."[13] These few lines put in a nutshell the cause and justification of the assumption of the rights and obligations of the Paramount Power in India by the British. It was a natural sequel of the military triumphs of Wellesley, but its operation was suspended by the policy of non-interference since pursued by the British for more than a decade. The Marquess of Hastings rendered this paramountcy practicable, nay almost inevitable, by bringing within direct British control, or their sphere of influence, the vast stretch of region roughly comprising Mālwa, Central India and Rājputāna. The Marāthā chiefs and Pindaris had to yield to the force of arms, but the Rājput chiefs agreed with alacrity to barter away their independence for a British Protectorate.

When Lord Hastings decided to crush the Pindaris he formulated a general policy of bringing the Rājput States within the sphere of British influence in order to "establish a barrier against the revival of the predatory system or the extension of the power of Sindhia and Holkar". With this view it was thought desirable to conclude engagements with the Rājput States "on conditions which should give to the British Government the entire control over their political relations and proceedings with each other and with foreign States, secure to them the enjoyment of their territorial possessions and the independent exercise of their internal adminis-

tration under our protection and guarantee, and render their resources available for defraying the charge that will be incurred in the establishment and support of this system."[14]

This new system was accepted by several minor Rājput States, such as Karauli and Kotā in 1817, and Bundi, Bikāner, Kishangarh, Bānswārā, Pratābgarh, Dungārpur and Jaisalmer in 1818.

The relation with the three major Rājput States, namely Mewār (Udaipur), Jaipur (Amber), and Mārwār (Jodhpur) was defined by treaties which provided for 'perpetual friendship, alliance and unity of interests' between these States and the British from generation to generation. The treaty with Mewār was signed in Delhi on January 13, 1818, its main provisions are noted below.

1. The British Government undertook to "protect the principality and territory of Udaipur."

2 The Rāṇā of Udaipur promised to "act in subordinate cooperation with the British Government and acknowledge its supremacy", and not to have "any connection with other chiefs or States", nor "to enter into any negotiation with any chief or State without the knowledge and sanction of the British Government "

3. All disputes between Mewār and other States would be submitted to the arbitration and award of the British Government.

4 The Rāṇā should always be the "absolute ruler of his own country" and British jurisdiction should not be inrtroduced into his principality.

5. The Rānā agreed to pay an annual tribute amounting to one-fourth of his revenue for the first five years, and to three-eighth after that in perpetuity.

The treaty with Jaipur was signed on April 2, 1818 It included the first four provisions, mentioned above, and fixed the annual tribute on a graduated scale amounting to eight lakhs in the sixth year and ever afterwards, until the Raja's revenue should exceed forty lakhs, when, in addition to eight lakhs he should pay five-sixteenth of all the revenue beyond forty lakhs. The treaty further provided that Jaipur "should furnish troops according to its means at the requisition of the British Government "

The tribute imposed upon Jaipur was undoubtedly very heavy. Tod observed: "The Jeypur Court justly deemed one-fifth (eight lakhs) of the gross revenues of the crown, a high rate of insurance for protection, but when we further stipulated for a prospective increase of nearly one-third of all surplus revenue beyond forty lakhs, they saw, instead of the generous Briton, a sordid trafficker

of mercenary protection whose rapacity transcended that of the Mahratta."[15]

The treaty with Mārwār, concluded on January 6, 1818, included the first four provisions mentioned above in connection with the treaty with Mewār. The Rāṇā further agreed to pay to the British the tribute which he had hitherto paid to Sindhia (one lakh and eight thousand Rupees). It was also stipulated that "the State of Jodhpur shall furnish 1,500 horse for the service of the British Government whenever required, and when necessary, the whole of the Jodhpur force shall join the British army, excepting such a portion as may be requisite for the internal administration of the country."

The proud Rājputs who had defied the Muslims for five hundred years voluntarily surrendered their independence to the British.

The annexation of Cutch may also be regarded as a part of the general settlement of the Marquess of Hastings. Reference has been made above to the treaty of alliance concluded between the British and Rao Bharmal II, ruler of Cutch, in A.D. 1816. But when the Rao murdered his cousin, and the British interfered on behalf of the widow of the deceased, he regarded it as undue interference in his internal administration not authorised by the treaty. He raised Arab troops to fight against the British and, in 1819, laid siege to a fortified town belonging to a Jhareja chief under British protection. A British force acompanied by the leading Jhareja chiefs laid siege to the capital city Bhuj and captured it without any difficulty. The Rao, Bharmal, who surrendered, was deposed, and his infant son, Rao Desal II, was installed as chief. The administration was carried on by a Regency with the British Resident as its head and some Jhareja chiefs as members A new treaty was concluded in 1819 which confirmed most of the articles of the treaty of 1816. The State agreed to pay a subsidy of two lakhs of Rupees per annum and in return the Government of India guaranteed the integrity of Cutch and promised to protect it from all internal and external enemies.[16] But, though Cutch thus came within the sphere of British empire, disturbances continued for a long time, as will be described later.

III BHARATPUR

The first clear and formal enunciation of British Paramountcy in India was made in settling the affairs at Bharatpur. Raja Ranadhir Singh, the ruler of Bharatpur, died in 1823 without any issue. His brother named Baldeo Singh thereupon assumed the government and requested the British authorities to send him *Khilat* of investiture. Sir David Ochterlony, the British Resident in Mālwa and Rājputānā, supported the application of Baldeo Singh, but intimated

at the same time that Durjan Saul, the son of a younger brother of the deceased Raja, was likely to contest the succession on the ground of his having been adopted by the late ruler. But as the claim of Durjan Saul proved to be utterly unfounded, Baldeo Singh was recognised as a ruler of Bharatpur and received due investiture. On ascending the throne the new ruler of Bharatpur asked for the British guarantee for his minor son to succeed him. Although the British Government did not actually agree to this, and no definite authority was given to the Resident, the latter communicated to the ruler that his son was acknowledged as his heir and the ceremony of investiture took place early in February, 1824. On February 26, 1825, Raja Baldeo Singh died. Thereupon Durjan Saul, obviously encouraged by the reports of British reverses in the Burmese War, won over several battalions, captured the fort of Bharatpur, seized the boy-ruler, and murdered his uncle, who was his guardian and the prime minister. At this turn of events Ochterlony assembled all the soldiers he could gather and issued a proclamation that British troops were advancing to rescue Balwant Singh, the boy-ruler, from the hands of the usurper Durjan Saul. These acts were, however, strongly disapproved by the Governor-General in Council and all the military preparations were suspended.[17] The Government also practically censured the Resident on the imperfect manner in which he reported the events of Bharatpur. Thereupon Sir David Ochterlony resigned his office. Sir Charles Metcalfe was appointed to the Residency of Delhi, and the duties connected with Rājputāna were allotted to him, Mālwa being transferred to another officer. As soon as the military preparations were countermanded, Durjan Saul preferred a claim to the throne on the ground that he had been adopted by a previous ruler of Bharatpur. The situation of Bharatpur became further complicated by the quarrels between Durjan Saul and his brother Madhu Singh, who retired to the strong fortress of Deeg, established his authority over the surrounding region, and collected troops with which he repulsed the attack made by Durjan Saul. This civil war led to chaos and confusion, not only in the dominions of Bharatpur but also in the neighbouring British territories, which were plundered by some of the Marāthās, who joined one or the other of the rival parties. The Governor-General in Council now regarded the situation as alarming, but there was a difference of opinion among the members of the Council regarding the proper line of policy to be pursued. The Governor-General held the orthodox view that it was inexpedient to interfere in the internal concerns of Bharatpur and argued "that such interference was not called for by the treaty nor had ever been practically exercised, except in acknowledging, when invited, the lawful successor to the Raj." The other members

of the Council were, however, strongly in favour of interfering in the affairs of Bharatpur. Their arguments more or less amounted to this that the British Government now occupies the position of paramount authority in India and the duty of maintaining general security and prosperity of the whole country "is now happily vested in the British Government." The Commander-in-Chief upheld the same view on the ground of the danger "to which the British Government was exposed by the probable extension of disturbances beyond the boundary of Bharatpur." On the arrival of Sir Charles Metcalfe in Calcutta (fom Hyderābād where he was posted before) all the reports and the documents connected with the affairs of Bharatpur were placed before him and he was requested to state his opinion. Sir Charles Metcalfe drew up a memorandum which must be regarded as very important inasmuch as it enunciated a new policy of imperialism which henceforth guided the policy of the British Government in India. He admitted that things have changed a great deal after the Third Marāthā War, which made the British the paramount State of India, and asserted that it was now "an established principle of our policy to maintain tranquillity among the states of India, and to prevent the anarchy and misrule which were likely to disturb the general peace." He further held that if the British Government refused to put the legitimate ruler on the throne of Bharatpur, they would "throw the weight of British power into the scale of usurpation and injustice." He continued: "Our influence is too pervading to admit of neutrality, and sufferance would operate as support." He further observed with reference to Indian States that "we cannot be indifferent spectators of long-continued anarchy therein without ultimately giving up India again to the pillage and confusion, from which we rescued her in 1817 and 1818". He also pointed out, by quoting instances, that the policy of non-interference adopted after the peace of 1806 had absolutely failed. In conclusion he observed: "We are bound, not by any positive engagement to the Bharatpur State, nor by any claim on her part, but by our duty as supreme guardians of general tranquillity, law, and right, to maintain the legal succession of Raja Balwant Singh to the *raj* of Bharatpur, and we cannot acknowledge any other pretender. This duty seems to me to be so imperative, that I do not attach any peculiar importance to the late investiture of the young Raja in the presence of Sir David Ochterlony. We should have been equally bound without that ceremony, which, if we had not been under a pre-existing obligation to maintain the rightful succession, would not have pledged us to anything beyond acknowledgment." On perusal of the memorandum of Sir Charles Metcalfe the Governor-General changed his views and remarked: "I have hitherto entertained the opinion that our inter-

ference with other states should be limited to cases of positive injury to the Honourable Company, or of immediate danger thereof. In that opinion I have reason to believe that I am not supported by the servants of the Honourable Company most competent to judge of its interests and best acquainted with the circumstances of this country. I should, therefore, have hesitated in acting upon my own judgment in opposition to others, but I am further free to confess, that my own opinion has undergone some change, and that I am disposed to think that a system of non-interference, which appears to have been tried and to have failed in 1806, would be tried with less probability of success, and would be exposed to more signal failure, after the events which have occurred and the policy which has been pursued during the last nineteen or twenty years. A much greater degree of interference than was formerly called for appears to have resulted from the situation in which we were placed by the pacification of 1818. It might be a hazardous experiment to relax in the exercise of that paramount authority which our extended influence in Malwa and Rajputana has specially imposed on us. Applying these general principles to the particular cases before us, and believing that without direct interference on our part there is a probability of very extended disturbances in the Upper Provinces, I am prepared, in the first place, to maintain by force of arms, if necessary, the succession of Balwant Singh to the raj of Bharatpur.' Thereupon a resolution was passed by the Governor-General in Council on September 18, 1825 to the following effect. "Impressed with a full conviction that the existing disturbances at Bharatpur, if not speedily quieted, will produce general commotion and interruption of the public tranquillity in Upper India, and feeling convinced that it is our solemn duty, no less than our right, as the paramount power and conservators of the general peace, to interfere for the prevention of these evils, and that these evils will be best prevented by the maintenance of succession of the rightful heir to the raj of Bharatpur authority he conveyed to Sir C. T. Metcalfe to accomplish the above object, if practicable by expostulation and remonstrance, and, should these fail, by a resort to measures of force" The fort of Bharatpur, which had defied four attacks of Lord Lake in 1805, was regarded as an impregnable one throughout India, and the British Government now wanted to remove this impression caused by their previous failure. So after the negotiations with Durjan Saul proved futile, Sir Charles Metcalfe, on November 25, 1825, issued a proclamation denouncing the pretensions of Durjan Saul and declaring the intention of the British Government to support the interests of the rightful prince. A large force was sent against Bharatpur under the Commander-in-Chief, Lord Cum-

bermere. The General reached Bharatpur on December 10, and after a breach was effected by bombardment from the artillery and by laying undergound mines, the fort of Bharatpur was taken by assault on December 18, 1825 The failure of Lord Lake in 1805 was thus avenged. After the fall of Bharatpur other fortresses within the dominions readily surrendered and the Raja's authority was firmly re-established all over the country.[18]

Though by itself the incident at Bharatpur may be regarded as a trifling one, it has been discussed at some length because the imperialistic policy of the British was never before so clearly and elaborately defined by the Government As we shall see, this principle henceforth formed the sheet-anchor of the British policy in India.

IV. AFGHĀN WAR

The imperial policy of the Government of India, as mentioned above, led them to look beyond the north-eastern as well as the north-western frontier The result of the first was the war with Burma and that of the second, the war with Afghānistān

There was, however, an essential difference between the two. The imperial policy on the north-east was primarily inaugurated by the British officials in India and pursued without the knowledge and approval, sometimes in defiance, of the clear direction or instruction of the home authorities. The imperial policy on the north-west was dictated by the latter in the larger interests of British imperialism

The north-western frontier policy of India began in the closing years of the eighteenth century as a defensive measure against the threatened invasion of India from that side, first by Napoleon, and next by Zaman Shah, ruler of Kābul To counteract this the British secured the alliance of Persia, and thus this far-off region was thrown into the vortex of Indian politics. But though Napoleonic menace ceased with his downfall, and Afghānistān's striking power practically collapsed as a result of internal dissensions that followed the death of Zamān Shah in A.D. 1800, a new danger soon appeared in the growing power of Russia. The aggressive and imperialistic policy. pursued by that power in Central Asia, and the methods adopted for its realisation, did not differ in kind from those of Britain in India. But imperialism, as a rule, tolerates no rival, and Russia not only stood in the way of further expansion of British power beyond the borders of India, but even seemed to threaten the security of India itself. The British statesmen naturally stressed only the latter aspect in justification of their anti-Russian policy and measure,

though at that time not only Sindh, the Punjāb and Afghānistān, but a vast stretch of territory beyond the Hindu Kush mountains separated the British dominions in India from the advance-posts of Russia. There is no doubt that the ambition of extending the British power in Central Asia was an important factor in shaping the British foreign policy. Palmerston and Disraeli, the two outstanding statesmen of Britain in the nineteenth century, though belonging to opposite political parties, were at one about the forward policy in Central Asia, and hence imbibed an anti-Russian attitude. The two Afghān wars, at an interval of forty years, may be directly traced to them, and in both cases the Government of India merely carried out the policy dictated by home authorities. But though this remark applies generally to the negotiations with Persia and Afghānistān, and the general line of policy and course of action pursued up to the arrival of Lord Auckland as Governor-General, his personal attitude came to play an increasingly important part in the practical application of the policy which led to the First Afghān War. The policy decided upon was to maintain a friendly Government in Kābul in order to checkmate Russian designs, and a mission was sent to Kābul for this purpose. But Auckland misled the Home authorities by supplying a garbled version of the report of Burnes, the special British envoy sent to negotiate with Dost Muhammad, the Amir of Kābul, and decided to oust him by force and place on the throne Shah Shuja, an ex-ruler of Kābul, who had been living as an exile in India for nearly thirty years. Auckland thus deliberately precipitated a war which could have been easily avoided. He is also, at least partially though indirectly, responsible for the massacre of the entire British force of 4,500 and camp-followers numbering 12,000, the worst tragedy that ever befell the British army in the whole course of their history in India.

A detailed account of the negotiations and events leading to the first Afghān War (1839-42) is given in Ch. VII. It will be seen that the current view about the hands of the British being forced by the pro-Russian and anti-British attitude of Dost Muhammad would not bear a moment's scrutiny. In any case Dost Muhammad was more sinned against than sinning. The military expedition was decided upon as a counter-measure to the threatened occupation of Herāt by Persia, but when Persia raised the siege of Herāt and withdrew her forces, that fear disappeared altogether. But though the *casus belli* was removed, Auckland continued the military preparation, which he could easily stop, and launched a full-scale attack upon an inoffensive ruler who, as he knew full well, had done or meant no harm, and, for the moment at any rate, was incapable of doing any. The gross injustice of the war is underlined by the

fact that it was barren of all result that was expected from it. The new friendly Amir, Shah Shuja, who was placed on the throne of Kābul in order to safeguard the interests of the British and help them in the political game, met with a tragic end. The British were obliged to restore Dost Muhammad after unnecessarily making him a bitter enemy The only positive result was the grim and gruesome tragedy of the wholesale massacre of the retreating British army, the unparalleled disgrace of British arms, and the irrevocable loss of prestige and good name of Britain. So far as India was concerned, she had no say in the whole affair, but had to bear the whole expenditure of the war which was fought in the interest of British imperialism.

1 *The Private Journal of the Marquess of Hastings*, pp 30-1.
1a. Arnold, II. 7-8.
2 Sketches, 92-3
2a Arnold, II 10
2b. Ibid.
2c Ibid, 11
3 *CHI*, V 582
4 *THG*, 397
5. *THG*, 382
6 *The Private Journal of the Marquess of Hastings*, pp. 26-7. Italics mine.
7 Henry Cotton, *Indian and Home Memories*, 253-4 See Ch XXVII
8 In other words, on principles diametrically opposite to what Abraham Lincoln declared to be essentials for democracy and liberty, namely, the rule of a people by the people for the people.
9 MH, 191
10 Ibid, 190.
10a B N Banerji, 'Raja Rammohun Roy's Mission to England' in *Modern Review*, January, 1930, pp 60 ff
10b Kaye-I, Vol II, pp. 12, 661-2.
10c Mill, IX 183
11 For the texts of the various treaties referred to in this Chapter Cf Aitchison For the summary of the treaties with various Rajput States, cf A C Banerji, *Rajput Studies*.
12 A Convention was signed on March 15, 1802, by which the Gaekwar agreed to maintain a Subsidiary Force. A formal treaty was signed to this effect on July 29, 1802 This was supplemented by an agreement in 1803 by which the Gaekwar ceded some districts for the support of the Subsidiary Force These three engagements were consolidated in a definitive Treaty of General Defensive Alliance on April 21, 1805.
13 Sketches, 85
14. Secret Consultations, October 28, 1817, No. 26 (quoted by Banerji, op cit p. 323).
15. James Tod, *The Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, Vol II (Calcutta 1894), pp 313-4
16. SB, 162-3
17. This decision was probably influenced, to a large extent, by the events of the Burmese War. Wilson observes: "Embarrassed at this period by the continued difficulties and heavy disbursements of the war with Ava, and aware of the unfriendly feeling, with which its progress was watched by the princes of India, the British Government was not unnaturally anxious to avoid a rupture, the consequences of which, in the case of any reverse, might endanger the stability of the British Indian Empire (Mill, IX. 185).
18. This account is based upon Thornton, V. 120 ff.

CHAPTER III

EXPANSION OF BRITISH DOMINIONS (1823-48)

I. BURMA AND ASSAM

Baron (later Earl) Amherst, who succeeded Marquess of Hastings as Governor-General, had every reason to follow the policy of peace. The arduous and prolonged military activities of his predecessor cried aloud for a halt, and this was underlined by the known views of the Court of Directors who selected him after openly denouncing the stormy regime which had just come to an end. Yet we find Amherst engaged in two military campaigns which strikingly illustrate the two different ways, mentioned above, along which British imperialism always advanced in India.

The first arose out of the growth of Burmese power in the north-eastern corner of the British territory. Neither the increase in Burmese activities nor the troubles arising therefrom on the borders of Assam and Chittagong were of recent origin, and had been going on for some time But now that the British power was thoroughly established and there was no danger of internal troubles, the imperial instincts of the British rulers in India looked for fresh fields and pastures new Several reasons combined to induce them to make a serious endeavour to curb the growing power of the Burmese. The security of the borderlands was certainly one, but only one, of the reasons. It was the only one publicly announced, but it is difficult to believe that the further expansion of British dominions to the north-east, up to the natural frontier, and to secure a footing on the soil of Burma, rich with commercial possibilities, were not equally imperative motives behind the campaign. A medieval country like Burma, ill-acquainted with weapons and methods of modern warfare, and with its base situated at a great distance from Indian border and divided from it by almost impenetrable hills and forests, could by no means be regarded as a serious menace to the British power in India after A D 1820. Her claims of sovereignty over Eastern India and pretentious demands couched in insolent language, which formed the *casus belli*, were more deserving of ridicule than any serious consideration As regards border disputes which led to warlike operations, any impartial critic is bound to admit that there were provocations on both sides, and even according to the British version of the case, which alone is available, it would be unfair to throw the war-guilt upon the Burmese alone. In any case the actual matters of dispute were so trivial in nature

as could be easily settled, perhaps amicably, and if necessary by local military expeditions.

A detailed account of the First Burmese War (1824-26) and the events leading thereto, has been given in chapter V. The declaration of Cāchār as a British protectorate, which was the immediate cause of the war, was certainly calculated to give just offence to the Burmese who had a claim over it, which was at least far more legitimate than that by which the British had acquired most of their possessions in India. This justice of the Burmese cause was patent even to some British officials, but Amherst paid no heed to their advice. The real motive of the Governor-General is revealed in his despatches. The Burmese had established their political authority in Assam and the neighbouring districts, up to the borders of Bengal, by the same method which was followed by the British. But the two of a trade can never agree, and so the growing empire of Burma was looked upon as a rival to the British empire in India, and became an eyesore to the Governor-General. The First Burmese War was, therefore, really a struggle between two rival empires, and was the first fruit of the new imperialistic ambition which animated the British rulers in India But this was not all. Amherst had far-reaching designs. The very fact that in addition to military campaigns on the borders of British India, the war was carried to the soil of Burma proper by a well-equipped British expedition to a remote and unknown region in South Burma shows the ambitious designs of the Governor-General. It would be idle to pretend that such a risky and costly expedition was undertaken only to divert the military resources of the enemy from the British border The real reason was undoubtedly the establishment of a secure footing in South Burma which possessed good harbours and afforded facilities of a rich trade After the British power was securely established in India its scope for further expansion lay beyond her borders on the east and the west, the north and south being unfortunately shut off respectively by impassable Himalayas and the Indian ocean without limit. The actual insolence of the Burmese king offered an excuse for the war in the east, and the pretext of insolence on the part of the ruler of Afghānistān gave a similar opportunity on the west. The imperial policy worked on parallel lines in both cases, though there was an interval of more than a decade. On the north-west, too, the security of the border was an excuse, the menace of a rival Russian empire the real ground, and the ambition of carrying British flags to the heart of Central Asia, the dream which determined the imperial policy.

The British expedition in Burma met with serious calamities, not so much from the enemy, but from natural causes and inade-

quate provision to prevent or forestall them. This brought a just rebuke upon the Governor-General. But the fate of the war between a first class modern European power and a medieval Asiatic kingdom was never in doubt. The Burmese were defeated on all fronts and forced to accept terms that fulfilled all the objects for which the war was begun, and must have satisfied even the extreme imperialists. By the treaty of Yandābu, concluded in 1826, the Burmese ceded not only Assam, Arākān and the territories between the two which were contiguous to British India, but even the provinces of Yeh, Tavoy, Mergui and Tenāsserim on the east coast of Bay of Bengal. Thus were fixed the two ends of the noose round the neck of Burma, and all that was needed to strangle her was to tighten the rope on suitable opportunities. As three wars with Carthage enabled Rome to finish that kingdom, so three wars during the period covered by this volume ended the existence of Burma as an independent kingdom. The process was hastened by the appearance of France as a rival colonial power in Indo-China, like Russia in Central Asia, but in any case the fate of Burma was sealed by the First Burmese War.

The fate of Assam and the small adjoining districts ceded by the Burmese will be described in detail in Ch. V. These, as well as the other ceded territories, were administered by the Government of Bengal At the outbreak of the war, the British, in order to win over the sympathy and support of the people of Assam, promised to restore their independence as soon as the Burmese were driven away. But such promises are never meant to be kept. The British immediately annexed a part and adopted various plans to give a semblance of self-rule to the rest. But these did not prove satisfactory to either side, and within almost a decade all the small principalities, set up in the region under British suzerainty, were formally incorporated within the British dominions Assam proper was annexed in 1838, Central Cāchār in 1834, Jaintiā in 1835, and most of the frontier States at about the same time. The vestiges of autonomy that remained were gradually swept away.

The Government of Bengal administered Arākān through its own officers who were given different designations and different degrees of authority at different times There were at first Joint Commissioners, till 1829; then a Superintendent under the Commissioner of Chittagong till 1834; thereafter a Commissioner, helped by an Assistant Commissioner for each district and the capital city Akyab Tenāsserim was similarly administered through a Commissioner and Assistant Commissioners for the districts and the capital city Tavoy. But in view of the great distance and difficulties of

communication the Government of Bengal could exercise but little actual control, and mismanagement, maladministration and even corruption among high officials were rife. When Pegu was annexed after the Second Burmese War, it constituted the third Commissionership. But these three Commissionerships of Arākān, Tenāsserim and Pegu were formed in 1862 into the new province of British Burma, with its capital at Rangoon, directly under the Government of India. When Upper Burma was annexed in 1885 it was added to the old province, which was ruled by a Chief Commissioner from 1862 to 1897 and thereafter by a Lieutenant-Governor.

II. MYSORE, COORG, AND MINOR STATES

It is a significant comment on British imperialism in India that its process ran the usual course even when a man of pacific disposition like Lord William Bentinck was the Governor-General Reference will be made in Chapter V to the annexation of the petty States of Cāchār and Jaintiā in Assam. More importance attaches to the occupation of Mysore and the annexation of Coorg Historians of India have paid little attention to these imperialistic activities of Bentinck, and the *Cambridge History of India*[1] devotes one sentence each to Coorg, Mysore and the two States in Assam Yet the dealings with these four States fairly illustrate the policy of aggressive imperialism which was the order of the day. Only a short war was necessary in the case of Coorg, while the other three were seized without firing a shot. Macaulay's famous epigram that "peace hath her victories no less than those of war" was thus applicable to Bentinck in more senses than one In view of the general ignorance or indifference to this aspect of the administration of Bentinck, his political measures, referred to above, require a more elaborate treatment than would otherwise be necessary.

A. *Mysore*

As mentioned above, the old Hindu ruling family of Mysore was restored to power after the defeat and death of Tipu Sultan in A.D. 1799. A boy of three years was placed on the throne and the administration was carried on by an able Dewan, named Purnia. In 1811 the minor king Raja Krishna Udaiyar attained majority and took over the administration in his own hands. According to the British official version there was gross misrule in Mysore for twenty years with the result that the treasury was depleted and there was a rebellion which could not be quelled till force had been sent from Madras. During this period of twenty years the Governor of Madras more than once remonstrated with the Raja, but no improvement

followed. On September 7, 1831, Bentinck addressed a long letter to the Raja of Mysore stating the above facts and bringing some specific charges of maladministration and misgovernment. He concluded by informing the Raja that by virtue of the articles 4 and 5 of the Treaty of 1799 (which he quoted for ready reference) he has transferred the entire administration of the country into the hands of British officers "who will proceed immediately to Mysore".[2]

Thus the Raja of Mysore was dethroned with as little ceremony —or perhaps less—as is usually shown in dismissing a clerk in an office. Several interesting facts must be stated in order to form a proper judgment of the whole case.

The chief accusations against the Raja were made by Sir Thomas Munro, the Governor of Madras, who was strongly opposed to the original plan of restoring the old Hindu family to the sovereignty of Mysore In 1805, General Sir Arthur Wellesley had written to his brother, the Marquis Wellesley, in the following terms:

"I still fear the new Government of Madras, one of whose objects I believe is to overturn the existing system in Mysore, of which I have hitherto been the principal support".[3]

A high English military officer writes: "The hostility to the local self-government of Mysore became even stronger than before in Madras about the year 1820, and seems to have been strangely compounded of jealousy against native pretensions and partial independence, the greed of good appointments, and a strong desire to obtain the salubrious and pleasant station of Bangalore either as the permanent seat of the Madras Government, or as an occasional residence for the Governor and his Councillors. This last consideration was even urged by Lord William Bentinck upon the Court of Directors in 1834, as an argument in favour of that plan for dividing the Mysore territories between the Raja and the East India Company. ."[4]

In 1825, Munro visited Mysore and warned the Raja that, if the disorders in the State were not checked, direct interference of the British Government would be unavoidable. Now, under Article 4 of the Treaty which was invoked by Bentinck for taking over the administration of Mysore, it was clearly laid down that in case of maladministration which, it might be feared, would not leave in the treasury sufficient fund for the maintenance of troops, the Government of India shall have full right and power either to introduce such regulations and ordinances as may be deemed necessary for the improvement of administration, or to bring under direct British administration such part or parts of the territorial possessions of the Raja as may be necesary to make available sufficient funds for

defraying the expenses of the army. But Munro issued no ordinances or regulations and allowed the abuses to grow until the outbreak of a rebellion gave a sufficiently good pretext for taking over the administration, not of a part or parts, but of the whole of Mysore.[5]

Bentinck's action was inspired by the highly exaggerated reports of the Madras Government,[6] and the Raja was given no opportunity to defend himself. How ill-informed Bentinck was may be gathered from a single instance. In his letter dethroning the Raja, Bentinck alleged that "the subsidy due to the British Government has not been paid monthly according to the Treaty of 6th July 1799". But the fact is, as Bentinck himself later indirectly admitted, that the subsidy had never been in arrears even for a day.

After taking over the administration of Mysore, Bentinck appointed a Special Committee of Inquiry into the affairs of Mysore. This Committee submitted its Report on December 12, 1833. The Committee condemned the Raja's misrule, but they included in their censure the period of Purnia's administration, and with the exception of a profuse expenditure, no new charge was brought against the Raja. The Committee held that the assessment all over the country had been screwed up by Purnia to a height at which it could not have been maintained for many years longer; and that the decline of the revenue since the minister's dismissal had not "been caused entirely by misgovernment", but was "partly attributable to causes which were beyond the control of the Raja's administration." The Committee also pointed out that at the same time, and for the same cause, namely oppressive taxation, there was an insurrection in the adjacent British district of Canara, where the assessment of land revenue was much higher than that prevailing in Mysore The Committee further held that the rebellion which broke out in Naggur in Mysore was not a popular rising caused by intolerable tyranny, but was chiefly the work of some interested persons, aided by British insurgents and sustained by a firm belief, universally prevalent throughout Mysore, that the British Government was in favour of the insurgents, and would not support the Raja's authority.[7]

The views of Bentinck were radically changed by the Report of the Special Committee of Inquiry as well as by his own local investigations. He also realised the unconstitutional nature of his act in taking over the administration of the whole of Mysore. All this is evident from his long despatch to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors, dated April 14, 1834. He refers to the Raja in the following terms: "It is admitted by every one who has had an opportunity of observing the character of the Rajah, that he is in the highest degree intelligent and sensible. His disposition is

described to be the reverse of tyrannical or cruel......I believe he will make a good ruler in future..." Accordingly Bentinck suggested that three districts of Mysore yielding sufficient revenue for the upkeep of the military force, should be ceded to the Company and the remaining three districts of Mysore should be restored to the Raja's direct rule.[8]

In this despatch Bentinck had the candour to admit that he could not help entertaining doubts, both as to the legality and the justice of the course that has been pursued. He then continues:

"The Treaty warrants an assumption of the country with a view to secure the payment of our subsidy. The assumption was actually made on account of the Raja's misgovernment. The subsidy does not appear to have been in any immediate jeopardy.[9] Again the Treaty authorises us to assume such *part* or *parts* of the country as may be necessary to render the funds which we claim efficient and available. The whole has been assumed although a part would unquestionably have sufficed for the purpose specified in the Treaty; and with regard to the justice of the case, I cannot but think that it would have been more fair towards the Rajah, had a more distinct and positive warning been given him that the decided measure, since adopted, would be put in force, if misgovernment should be found to prevail."[10]

Thus Lord William Bentinck acted in haste and then repented at leisure. He should have appointed the Committee of Inquiry *before*, and not *after*, punishing the Raja, and he should have given more serious attention to the actual facts and the exact provisions of the treaty His belated confession of guilt does honour to his head and heart, but brought no relief to the unfortunate Raja of Mysore, who was not restored to the sovereignty of either the whole or a part of his territory It is somewhat singular that in spite of the confession of Bentinck himself, the British historians have fully approved of the annexation. Nor did this deplorable action make Bentinck much the wiser For as we shall see, he pursued the same unwise procedure in the affair of Coorg with more drastic consequences and irreparable mischief.

In fairness to the Britishers, however, reference should be made to the very honest criticism of Bentinck's action by Major Evans Bell, from which the following extracts are quoted·

"The summary substitution of direct British management was a somewhat harsh remedy for any administrative abuses, when the Treaty gave us the power of dictating and enforcing the acceptance of such ordinances as might have removed all cause of offence...... According to the strict letter of the Treaty (article IV), when it

should be thought necessary to have recourse to this extreme measure, we had no right to attach the whole of Mysore, but only "such part or parts" as should be requred to render the funds of the State 'sufficient and available either in time of peace or war'.......

"The first attachment of the country by Lord William Bentinck was not justified either absolutely by the terms of the Treaty or morally by any special urgency of outraged humanity, or of danger to the tranquillity of our own adjacent provinces. The fact is that the subsidy had been always paid with the utmost punctuality, and that not a single instalment was due at the date of the Governor-General's letter.

"Thus the grounds alleged for the original attachment of the country are not only unsustainable by terms of the Treaty, but are found to be even more opposed to truth than Lord William Bentinck was ever made aware".[11]

There is a great deal of force in the above argument and it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the taking over of the entire administration by the British was both unjust and uncalled for. The administration by a Regency headed by the Resident would probably have met the situation. There are, however, two points in connection with the seizure of Mysore, which may be regarded as almost unique in the annals of British imperialism in India. In the first place, the Governor-General, responsible for the action, admitted his mistake and regretted the action taken. Secondly, although the Court of Directors declined to reverse the sequestration, immediately after the error was recognized by its author, they ultimately made amends for it. When the deposed Raja of Mysore died in 1867, the British Government decided to restore the kingdom to his adopted son as soon as he came of age.[11a] This was actually done in 1881. There has been more unjustified annexation, severely condemned by the Directors, but no restitution Sindh is a glaring example. The rendition of Mysore is the solitary exception to the rule followed by the British authorities, namely condemning the action but fully enjoying the fruit thereof.

B. *Coorg*

Mysore shows how the general process of annexation of weak States followed the usual pattern of giving the dog a bad name and then hanging it. This is more strikingly illustrated by the annexation of Coorg (Kodagu) which followed shortly after. Coorg was a small principality on the border of Mysore. The British had received considerable help from the rulers of Coorg during their war with Tipu and a treaty was concluded in 1790 by which the British

'guaranteed the independence of Coorg and the maintenance of the Raja's interests as long as the sun and moon endure.[12] Since then the rulers of Coorg had always been faithful to the British and not only invested large amounts in East India Company's Stock, but also advanced considerable amount to the Company. But shortly after the accession of Viraraja the Younger in 1820, serious accusations began to pour in against him from the British officers. He was reported to have practised the most blood-thirsty tyranny, and a series of monstrous crimes, including wholesale massacre of members of the royal family, were attributed to him. The stage was thus set for his ultimate expulsion; and the actual course of events, as officially related, may be summed up as follows:

Being persecuted by the Raja, his sister, together with her husband, fled to Mysore in 1832, and claimed the protection of the British Resident, Mr. Cassamajor. This led to a series of altercations between the Resident and the Raja of Coorg who demanded the surrender of the two fugitives Other causes of difference soon arose. A rebel from Mysore, which was now being administered by the British, had fled to Coorg, and when the Raja was asked to send him back, he retorted by saying that his claims for the surrender of his rebel subjects, who had taken refuge in Mysore, were disregarded by the British Cassamajor was gradually convinced of the hostile intention of the Raja who was reported to have increased his army. An envoy was sent to negotiate with him, but the Raja refused to see him on ground of illness. Later, two Indians were sent for the same purpose, one of whom, Karunakara Menon, was forcibly detained by the Raja on the pretence that he was guilty of carrying on intrigues against him. The Governor-General, who proceeded on a tour to South India, personally wrote to the Raja from Calcutta requesting that either he himself or one of his agents might meet him at Mysore in order to adjust the existing differences. As no answer was received to this letter by the time the Governor-General arrived at Madras, he again addressed the Raja on the same subject, expecting to receive a reply at Bangalore. But no reply was received even to this letter, nor was the native agent released.

An ultimatum was given to the Raja of Coorg that unless Menon was released within six days hostilities would begin. On March 15, 1834, Bentinck issued a Proclamation of War against Coorg.[12a] It gave a long list of the charges against the Raja, among which the following were the major items:

1 Severe oppression and cruelty towards the people of Coorg.
2 Wanton disrespect of the authority of, and most hostile disposition towards, the East India Company.

3. Letters replete with insulting expressions to the Governor of Madras and the Governor-General.
4. Friendly reception and encouragement to the proclaimed enemies of the British Government.
5. Detention of Menon.
6. General attitude of hostility and defiance.

Immediately after the issue of this proclamation four British armies advanced against Coorg from four different directions. The Raja of Coorg also issued an appeal to his people to resist the invasion. But though the people fought bravely on all fronts, the result was a foregone conclusion. On April 6, the British force entered the capital of Coorg, Madikeri or Mercara, and five days later Coorg was annexed to the British dominions by a formal Proclamation.

The Raja, Viraraja the Younger, surrendered with his family on April 23. He was exiled, first to Bangalore, then to Vellore, and finally to Banaras In 1848 the Raja asked for permission to visit England, and necessary permission being accorded on March 20, 1850, he sailed for England with the full knowledge of the Goverment of India that he intended to fight for certain pecuniary claims against the East India Company.

There are good grounds to believe, that as in the case of Mysore, so in the case of Coorg, perhaps in a greater measure, Bentinck was misled by the exaggerated reports of his officers. Fortunately, there are some means to test the truth of the three main allegations against Viraraja, namely, his cruelty, his attitude towards his sister, and the detention of K. Menon. As regards the first, there is no independent and reliable evidence to support it. Even the British officer Col. Fraser, who was in charge of Coorg after the expulsion of the Raja, admitted in his final report that 'there was no proof to testify to his cruelties.'[13] Mr. Cassamajor, the British Resident of Mysore, who went to Mercara (Madikeri), the capital city of Coorg, in 1826, to make enquiries on the spot, 'could not get any bad reports against the Raja' and Mr. Lewis Rice had to admit that 'his (Cassamajor's) account of the Raja was on the whole rather favourable' [14] Some members of the royal family, alleged to have been killed by Viraraja, were shown to have died of cholera [15] Serious charges were made against the Raja by a British officer, Mr. S Greame, on November 6, 1833. The Raja asked him in writing to let him know the names of the parties he put to death, the place, the date etc. Mr Greame wrote as follows to the Raja on November 17,1833: "After many humble apologies, I beg to state that it was the mistake of the translator I do not bring such charges against

you and beg of you to forgive me and what I said was that you must prevent your officers from doing anything of the sort."[16] It may not be out of place to mention here that the way in which Viraraja deported himself after his exile at Banaras elicited high praises from many Englishmen including Lord Ellenborough and Lt. Col. Carpenter, agent to the Governor-General.[17] No reference to all these is made by historians like V. A. Smith who pictures the Raja as a devil incarnate.[18]

Most scandalous insinuations have been made regarding the attitude of the Raja towards his sister, but there is no evidence worth the name. It has been suggested that the sister had pretensions to the throne and, as is usual in native courts, made intrigues for this purpose Ultimately, being foiled in her attempts, she fled with her husband This version also lacks evidence, but in any case such a state of things is not unusual, and it is not unlikely that in order to poison the minds of the British and advance her own interests she manufactured all the tales of cruelty against the Raja.[19] As regards the detention of Menon, the Raja, it is said, suspected him to be a spy of the British on account of his not producing proper credentials.[20] The fact that the Raja did not detain the companion of Menon certainly goes in his favour. In any case the act of the Raja stands on the same level as that of the British in not surrendering the sister of the Raja

It is therefore difficult either to accept as valid the serious charges brought against the Raja, or to justify the *ex parte* decision of the British to dethrone him But if this was bad enough, the annexation of Coorg was much worse. It has been justified on two grounds[21] The first was the assumption that the Raja was childless The fact seems to be that the Raja had more than one son.[22] He had certainly a daughter, who later accompanied him to England and embraced Christianity The succession of females was well known in this part of India[22a] The official proclamation bases the annexation on another ground, namely, "the unanimous wish of the inhabitants of Coorg to be taken under the protection of the British Government."[23] This is a pet argument of the British which was frequently advanced to justify any annexation It is, however, interesting to note that in not a single instance they chose to divulge how, when, and by whom the opinion of the people was ascertained In the case of Coorg "the unanimous wish" was certainly a myth In the despatches of Col Fraser it is said that the people of Coorg desired that their Raja should be retained.[24] The feelings of the people may be ascertained from an Address presented to the Raja by 500 persons on April 13, 1834, "expressing their satisfaction for

the manner in which he had conducted the State affairs from the beginning to the days of his dethronement. . . ." The removal of the Raja from his country, they continued, "causes us pain and brings shame to us."[25] When it is remembered that the Address was presented when the Raja had lost all power and authority over his people, the theory or perhaps pretention of the "unanimous wish" of the people for British rule appears in its true colour.

The ignoble spirit of vengeance with which the East India Company pursued the Raja makes the tragedy still more deplorable. In a petition which was placed before the British Parliament the Raja complained.

"The East India Company took possession of his dominion, seized his treasury and valuable amount of £150,000 and in flagrant violation of the Law of Nations appropriated to themselves the capital of £80,000 East India Stock together with dividends." [26] Apparently for this contumacy the Raja was also deprived of his monthly pension.[27]

The Raja proceeded to England and appealed to the British Parliament. The Marquess of Clanricarde, who introduced the subject in the House of Lords in 1856, observed with reference to the stoppage of pension, that "a more despotic act was never perpetrated."[28] Lord Ellenborough also remarked that "the conduct of the Court of Directors in refusing payment to the prince was very ungenerous and unwise."[29] Evidently as a result of the discussion in the House of Lords, the Court of Directors decided to pay the pension in full from the time of the suspension of its payment. The Raja, however, got no satisfaction for the confiscation of his property.

The money looted from the Raja was generously distributed as prize money among the British officers. Sir P Lindsay received one-sixteenth of the whole amount and the other officers shared as follows:[30]

Colonels	Rs. 25,000	each
Lieut-Colonels	„ 15,000	„
Majors	„ 10,000	„
Captains	„ 5,000	„
Subalterns	„ 2,500	„

It may be ungenerous, but perhaps not unreasonable, to find in such distribution the incentive to wage hostilities against the Indian rulers and prepare the way therefor by attributing all the vices to them. On the whole it is difficult to resist the conclusion that the annexation of Coorg was pre-planned, the alleged cruelty and misconduct of the Raja, and the unanimous desire of the people for the

British protection being merely lame excuse and concocted justification. Coorg lost its independence not so much on account of the contumacy or cruelty of its ruler, as for possessing, like Mysore, a salubrious climate aggreable to the British, and in addition, extensive lands eminently suitable for coffee plantation.[31]

C. *Minor States and Territories*

Two other minor annexations were made by the next two Governors-General The Company had acquired suzerainty over the *Jāgīr* of Kurnool, in Madras, in 1800. A disputed succession of 1815 led to interference and temporary occupation of the city of Kurnool. In 1839 the Nawab Rasul Khan, whom the British had installed in 1823 after arresting the legitimate heir on a charge of murder, was himself charged with conspiracy against the British. When Commissioners with troops were sent to make inquiry into his conduct he took refuge with some Rohilla and Arab soldiers. He was defeated and his State was annexed by Auckland in 1839.[32]

The annexation of Kaithal (Kythul) by Ellenborough in 1843 deserves more than a passing notice. Kaithal, in the district of Karnāl, was one of those cis-Sutlej Sikh States which had sought for British protection against Ranjit Singh and had come under British protection in 1809, as mentioned above[33] The proclamation, dated May 3,1809, which defined the status of these States declared them to be absolute in their own territories and exempt from the payment of any tribute Nevertheless, when the Chief of Kaithal died, without leaving any male issue, Ellenborough declared that the territory had lapsed to the British. He annexed four-fifths of the territory, leaving the rest to a distant branch of the family. This was a high-handed act, even according to the famous Doctrine of Lapse, evolved a few years later; for Kaithal was not a State created by the British. The Political Officer who proceeded with a small escort to take possession of Kaithal was met by passive resistance on the part of the female relations and ministers of the late chief. The escort was defeated by the military retainers of the State. When a larger British force arrived on April 16, 1843, the town was evacuated and Kaithal was occupied without any further resistance.[34]

Some small territorial acquisitions were made by more peaceful means. By a treaty signed between Great Britain and the Netherlands in 1824, Dutch territories in Bengal, viz., those at Fultā, Chinsurā, Kalkāpur and Dacca were ceded to the British. The town of Serampore, near Calcutta, was purchased from the king of Denmark in 1845. Darjeeling and adjacent territories were also acquired

from Sikkim, partly as present, and partly by a military expedition in 1850.

III. THE CONQUEST OF SINDH

The disastrous Afghān campaign was followed by the forcible seizure of Sindh (1843) of which a detailed account is given in Ch. VIII. It was an instance of unmasked aggression, backed by sheer brutal force, to which there are few parallels in the whole course of Indo-British history. For this exhibition of the worst type of imperialism the blame must be shared equally, and almost exclusively, by Lord Ellenborough and Sir Charles Napier. The elaborate arguments in defence of their action form an apt illustration of the logic of the strong towards the weak But the annexation of Sindh is marked by a unique feature. It is perhaps the only one of the many unjust annexations of Indian territories by the British which was unequivocally condemned by both the people and the Government in Britain. Even Napier, the joint author of the tragedy, himself described the act as a 'piece of rascality'. But it is interesting to note, as an illustration of Britain's political morality, that while fully admitting the injustice of the action, she did not make amends for it by the restoration of the prize, so wrongfully gained, to its rightful owner.

Though mainly dictated by the imperialist policy, the British conquest of Sindh was also partly a reaction of the Afghān war. At its best, it may be described as an attempt to rehabilitate the British power and prestige which had suffered almost irretrievably by the disastrous retreat of the British army through the Khyber Pass At its worst, it was the action of a bully who, being kicked by a stronger neighbour, wreaks vengeance on a weaker and unoffending one.

IV. THE CONQUEST OF THE PANJAB

The fear entertained by Ellenborough of an impending conflict with the powerful Sikh army was not altogether unfounded Several reasons combined to make it almost inevitable. The British, who had conquered the rest of India, naturally desired to extend their authority up to the Sindhu which formed the natural boundary of India. So long as Ranjit Singh lived and ruled with an iron hand at the head of his wonderfully trained Khalsa army, the Government of India thought it politic to humour him and not to provoke his wrath and hostility On the other hand, Ranjit was too shrewd a statesman to under-estimate the real power of the British, and always took good care to keep on friendly terms with the Government of India. A man of blood-and-iron policy, he restrain-

ed himself from the conquest of Sindh for fear of incurring the displeasure of the British. His participation with the British in a joint endeavour to place Shah Shuja on the throne of Kābul, of which a detailed account will be given in Ch. VII, shows how he maintained this friendly attitude till the last.

The death of Ranjit Singh in A D. 1839 precipitated the crisis. The absence of a strong leader who could succeed Ranjit Singh, and the anarchy and confusion that consequently followed in the Panjāb after his death, offered a tempting opportunity to the British of completing the conquest of India up to its natural frontier on the west This alone can satisfactorily account for the steady increase in the military force on the border, as will be shortly mentioned The annexation of Sindh, which left the Panjāb as the only enclave in India free from British control, in a way facilitated its conquest by the removal of a potential danger on the flank.

Either due to a knowledge or intelligent anticipation of such an attitude on the part of the British, or to an under-estimate of the British military strength owing to recent events in Afghānistān, or to some other factor, yet unknown, the Sikhs, forgetting the wisdom of Ranjit Singh's policy, gradually, but unmistakably, developed an unfriendly feeling towards the English This could be clearly seen in their lack of hearty co-operation with the English in the later stages of their joint military enterprise against Afghānistān to which reference will be made later. So the two-fold reaction of Ranjit Singh's death, on the English and on the Sikhs, tended to bring about a conflict between the two.

The actual events or circumstances leading to the war are but imperfectly known, and these have been described in detail in Ch. X Although the Sikhs were made to appear as aggressive and unnecessarily provocative, the British were not perhaps the innocent lambs as they are usually represented. The sense of injured innocence which is echoed in the Governor-General's declaration of war is hard to reconcile with the fact that ever since the death of Ranjit Singh the British troops on the border of the Panjāb were steadily on the increase. Up to 1838, there were no more than 2,500 men with six pieces of artillery. Auckland raised it to 8,000, and when Lord Ellenborough left India in 1844 the number rose to 17,612 men and sixty-six guns. By the end of December, 1845, there were 40,523 men and ninety-four guns. This rapid increase could hardly be justified as a purely defensive measure. A critic, designated hostile, made a pithy remark which is very significant. "To be prepared is one thing," he said, "to be always making preparations, another." Besides, the preparations were not all of a

defensive character. Boats were being constructed at Bombay for the construction of bridges of boats across the Sutlej, and troops were assembled in Sindh which could have no other object than attacking Multān. With the fate of Sindh in recent memory, the Sikhs may be certainly excused if, as Cunningham tells us, they looked upon the British military preparations as "a campaign, not of defence, but of aggression."

As will be explained in Ch. X, there is no doubt that the internal situation of the Panjāb mainly accounts for the fact that the Sikh army crossed the Sutlej without any formal declaration of war. But the righteous indignation felt by the British authorities at this conduct should have been considerably mollified by the reflection that the Sikhs had merely taken a leaf out of the book of their general Sir Charles Napier. Like him, the Sikhs also perhaps believed in a surprise attack as having the best chance of success. In any event, the tactics adopted only two years ago by the mighty British against weak and helpless Sindh, when resorted to by the Sikhs against themselves, need not have inflamed their moral sense to a feverish heat.

Like the origin of the war, the incidents of the campaign are also partly shrouded in mystery. We shall never know what part treachery played in the discomfiture of the Sikhs at the four successive battles of Mudki (December 18, 1845), Firozshāh (December 21-22), Āliwal (January 28, 1846) and Sobrāon (February 10, 1846). But there is no doubt that the Khalsa of Ranjit Singh gave a good account of themselves, and as far as fighting quality goes, brought no discredit on the name of their great leader. It was remarked by the British general on December 21, after the first day of battle in Firozshāh, that "the fate of India trembled in the balance". At the next battle at Mudki, the victory was gained at such a great cost, that the Governor-General requested the home authorities to recall Gough, the Commander-in-Chief, and necessary orders were at once issued, though by the time they reached India the decisive victory of Gough over the Sikhs at Sobrāon rehabilitated his credit and it was not thought necessary to make the orders public.

The treaty concluded on March 9 at Lahore brought the hostilities to an end. Its details, given in Ch. X, need not be repeated here. The Sikh Government had to cede the Jālandar *doāb* between the Beas and the Sutlej and all the territories lying to the south of the last-named river. The British also got Kāshmir, Hāzarā and other hilly regions between the Beas and the Sindhu, in lieu of the war indemnity of one and a half crores of Rupees. Out of this

Ghulab Singh, who had rendered valuable services to the British, was granted Kāshmir for a sum of money. Dalip Singh was recognised as the Maharaja, and the British Government promised not to interfere in the internal administration of the country.

A British force was left in the Panjāb and Henry Lawrence was appointed the British agent at Lahore Durbar. Events, however, marched rapidly, as will be described in detail in Ch. X. Intrigues and insurrections, aided by British diplomacy, led to a revision of the treaty which virtually transferred the administration of the State to the hands of the British and authorised the British to garrison the whole country by their own troops at the expense of the Sikh Durbar. So long as Henry Lawrence was the British Resident, things went on smoothly, but under his successor, Sir Frederick Currie, troubles began, and things were cleverly manoeuvred towards an open rebellion on the part of the Sikhs such as would justify the wholesale annexation of the Panjāb, which had long been regarded by the British statesmen as a 'consummation to be devoutly wished for.'

The contumacious conduct of Mulraj, the Governor of Multān, gave the requisite opportunity. It is to be noted that the British Resident, charged with the administration of the Panjāb, did not immediately take sufficient steps to crush him. There are good grounds to believe that disaffection was deliberately allowed to be spread so that the Government of India might have a *casus belli* for the fight to a finish.

V TERRITORIES OUTSIDE INDIA

The conquest of the island of Ceylon had been completed in 1815 It has been noted above[35] that during the Napoleonic wars in Europe an expedition from Bengal conquered Java, but it was restored to the Dutch in 1814. The Dutch, however, tried to exclude the British from all share of trade in this region and Lord Hastings felt the necessity of securing the trade-route to China by strengthening British possessions in the east. He therefore approved of the proposal, recommended by Sir Stamford Raffles (originally Governor of British possessions in Java and then of a small colony in Sumatra), of occupying the island of Singapur, which was then peopled by only a few fishermen. In spite of the protests of the Dutch authorities, Raffles seized the almost deserted island in A D. 1819. Friction between the Dutch and the English continued till 1824, when a treaty was signed defining their respective spheres of influence. By this treaty the British received from the King of the Netherlands the Dutch possessions in India, as well as Malacca and

Singapur, in exchange for the British settlements in Western Sumātrā.[35a] The situation of Singapur was recognised to be of great importance from both commercial and political points of view, but its possession was involved in some difficulty. Two Malay Princes had a claim over it, of whom one was nominally a vassal of the other, but had actual and effective possession of the territory. The relations of both of these with the King of the Netherlands was also not quite clear. Therefore, on receiving the rights of the latter, the British entered into a definite agreement with the two native princes, known as Sultan and Tumongong of Johor. By a treaty concluded on August 2, 1824, both the princes ceded the island of Singapur together with the adjacent sea-straits and islands, up to a specified limit, to the British "in full sovereignty and property." In return, an annual grant was made by the British, but this was to lapse with the lives of the existing princes.[36]

During the First Burmese War, a treaty was concluded between the British Government and the King of Siam on July 20, 1826. The help given by the ruler of Siam during the war was fully recognised and mutual alliance and friendship and facility for commerce were provided by the treaty. The British also agreed to recognise the existing boundaries of the kingdom of Siam.[37] This meant, in effect, that the possession of Kedda was guaranteed to the Siamese. The justice and expediency of this may well be questioned, for Kedda had a previous history. It was situated on the Western coast of Malacca and formerly belonged to a Prince with whom the British had concluded several engagements. "In the year 1786, Captain Light, the master of a country ship received from the King of Kedda the island of Pulo Penang (since called Prince of Wales Island), as a marriage portion with the sovereign's daughter. Captain Light transferred it to the East India Company, by whom he was appointed Governor, and an arrangement was concluded with the King of Kedda for the payment to that Prince of six thousand dollars annually, to compensate for the loss of revenue which he was likely to sustain. In 1800, a cession of territory on the mainland was made to the Company. This acquired the name of Province Wellesley, and in consideration of its surrender the payment to the King of Kedda was raised to ten thousand dollars. In 1821, the remaining territories of the King of Kedda were invaded by the Siamese and quickly subdued, the prince thereupon taking refuge in Prince of Wales Island."[38] In view of the above circumstances it is difficult to justify the action of the British in guaranteeing the possession of Kedda to the Siamese.

Difficulties, however, soon arose when Kedda was restored to its old ruler by means of a military expedition, the preparations for

which were made within the British territory. As soon as this was brought to the notice of the British Government, they forced the ruler of Kedda to remove to Malacca. Further, the British Resident at Singapur helped the Siamese Government in recapturing Kedda by blockading the mouth of the river. This action was disapproved by the Government of Bengal, but before their instructions reached the Resident, the Siamese had already taken possession of Kedda. The whole transaction reflects great dishonour upon the British who gave away to the Siamese the territories of a prince with whom they had friendly relations for forty years.

There were troubles also in Malacca. After receiving this territory from the King of the Netherlands, the British claimed authority over a number of petty native principalities in the neighbourhood. One of these was Nanning, the chief of which resisted the demands of the British, and a military force was sent against him. After a great deal of difficulty, and not without some loss, the British ultimately subdued the chieftain.[39]

Considerations of trade and commerce influenced British policy not only in the eastern but also in the western sea. The piracy in the Arabian sea was a great menace to trade and several expeditions were fitted out in 1819-20 to check this growing evil. In course of two years piracy was effectively stopped by the suppression of the predatory fleet near the coast of Western India.

Aden was conquered in 1839. The crew and passengers of a ship under British colours, wrecked near Aden, were ill-treated by the Arabs, and the British seized this opportunity to secure possession of this much-coveted entrepot of the trade between the West and the East, famous as such since the beginning of the Christian era. The Sheikh of Lahej, to whom Aden belonged, was held responsible for the outrage, and the Government of Bombay demanded an explanation The upshot was that the Sheikh was forced to agree, not only to make compensation for the plunder of the ship, but also to sell the town and port of Aden to the British. The son of the Sheikh, however, refused to comply with these terms. Thereupon a combined naval and military force was sent, and Aden was captured and annexed to British India on January 16, 1839.

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1. CHI V 578
2 The letter is quoted in Bell-1, p 278
3 Bell-1, p 16.
4 Ibid, 17 The 'plan' will be referred to later
5 Sir Frederick Currie says· "The conditions of the 14th Article of the Treaty the British Government had themselves, it must be admitted, 'failed to fulfil,' when they systematically withheld from the Rajah the advice which, by that Article, they are bound to give to him in the conduct of every detailed department of the administration" Sir Henry Montgomery, Member of the India Council, wrote in his Dissent of July 13, 1863: "....it is well-known

and officially on record, that not only was no advice tendered, but that it was systematically and purposely withheld". Bell-1, p. 16.

6. Munro had left on record his firm convictions that no good could come of the administration of the Raja, and his successor held the same view. (Bell-1, p 20).
7. Bell-1, 25-6
8 Ibid, 22-3
9. As noted above, there was no arrear in the payment of subsidy, and Bentinck used this disingenuous expression in order to avoid flat contradiction to his original charge that the subsidy was not regularly paid.
10 Bell-1, p. 22
11 Ibid, 21-4
11a. Cf. the Proclamation issued on 30-3-1868 (Aitchison, Vol. IX, p. 249).
12 Aitchison, IX, 357
12a. Ibid, p 360.
13 Muthanna, I M, *A Tiny Model State of South India* (1953), p. 69.
14 Ibid, 61
15. Ibid, 94.
16 Ibid, 93
17 Ibid, 75-6
18. V A Smith writes· "He murdered all his male relatives and many of the females, often with his own hands His adherents contrived a plot to seize Bangalore and overthrow the Company's Government" (*Oxford History of India*, 1919, p 660) Smith cites no evidence for the charges The first of these is directly contradicted by the British officers mentioned above. The second charge is not referred to by the contemporary historian Thornton, and is too ridiculous to be taken seriously into consideration without the strongest positive evidence
19 Basu-1, p 776
20 Muthanna, op cit 64.
21 Thornton, V 214-5.
22 Muthanna quotes the evidence of British officers to the effect that there were two sons of the Raja born respectively in 1821 and 1832 He also says· "The sons and the widow of the Raja who were in Benares (where the Raja lived in exile before he went to England) had sent men in 1865 to obtain wives from among the leading Codagu families (pp. 95, 96, 99).
22a The daughter of Viraraja, the Elder, ruled for two years.
23 Aitchison, IX, 361
24 Muthanna, op cit, 96
25 Ibid, 74.
26 Ibid, 89.
27. Ibid, 85.
28 Ibid, 87.
29 Ibid.
30. *Asiatic Journal,* May, 1836, p. 33
31 In a letter dated April 17, 1834, the Governor of Madras drew the attention of Col Fraser to the good climate and other agreeable features of Mysore and Coorg, and it is a reasonable assumption that the arbitrary annexation of Coorg on false pretexts was greatly influenced by these considerations. Even an Englishman, Mr Cassell, wrote: "Codagu's annexation was preplanned." (Quoted by Muthanna, p. 70).
32 *CHI*, VI 38.
33 Detailed account is given in Vol. VIII Cf Cunningham, *History of the Sikhs* (1904), 197-204
34 Ellenborough's letter to the Queen, dated April 20, 1843; Basu-1, p. 852
35 See Vol VIII.
35a For the terms of the Treaty of 1824, the negotiations leading to it and its effect upon the British expansion in the east, cf *The British in the Malay Indies* by Dr S N Das Gupta, Ch VI
36 Thornton, V 169-172
37 Ibid, 101-4.
38. Ibid, 192-3.
39. Ibid, 189-200.

CHAPTER IV

THE ANNEXATIONS OF DALHOUSIE

A. THE PANJĀB

The policy of Lord Dalhousie towards the Indian States was thus formulated by him: "I take this fitting occasion of recording my strong and deliberate opinion that in the exercise of a wise and sound policy the British Government is bound not to put aside or neglect such rightful opportunities of acquiring territory or revenue as may from time to time present themselves".[1] Lord Dalhousie carried the theory into practice with such a determination that 'he changed the map (of India) with speed and thoroughness no campaign had equalled'[1a] The additions he made to the British territory in India increased its revenue by four millions and a half sterling and its area by districts equal to Russia in Europe.[1b]

But in doing this he does not seem to have remembered the condition of such acquisition, which he recorded a few lines later in the same minute, namely, "Where even a shadow of doubt can be shown, the claim should at once be abandoned".[2]

When Dalhousie arrived in India as the Governor-General, it did not take him long to find out that the Panjāb was a ripe fruit only waiting to be plucked. So once more the war machinery was set in motion. But there was a great deal of difference between the First and the Second Sikh War This time there was no plea of aggressive attack by the Sikh army. Instead, we find a few local rebellions in a territory under the administration of the British and protected by their own troops. When or how these rebellions merged into a full scale war, it is not easy to determine. Even Lord Gough, the Commander of the British troops, who had crossed the Sutlej with his army on November 9, 1848, remarked on November 15, 'that he did not know whether he was at peace or at war, or who it was he was fighting for'.

This curious state of things has been discussed in detail in Chapter X which also gives a description of the two battles successively fought by the British at Chiliānwālā (January 13, 1849) and Gujarāt (February 21). As in the first war, the Sikh soldiers fought with great bravery and skill. The victory at Chiliānwālā—if victory it may be called—was won at a great cost. The British losses were over 2,000 and four guns, and the colours of three regiments were

captured by the Sikhs. As in the First Sikh War, Lord Gough was superseded by the home authorities, but before the news could reach India, he retrieved his honour by his second victory which proved decisive. The Sikh army made unconditional surrender. Peshāwār capitulated, and the Afghān auxiliaries hurried back to their home. The war was over and the Panjāb was formally annexed to the British dominion. Dalip Singh was set aside on a pension.

Whatever views one might entertain about the cause of the war, there can hardly be two opinions on the injustice of the annexation of the Panjāb The Panjāb, it should be remembered, was at that time under the absolute control of the British, and the administration was being carried on by the Resident on behalf of the minor Dalip Singh If there were local rebellions, the Government had undoubted right to punish the rebels. But it passes one's comprehension how the penalty can be visited upon the unoffending boy-ruler. He evidently forfeited his throne for failing to check the revolt; in other words, for not doing what he had no power or authority to do under the terms of a treaty imposed by the British themselves. By what logic, one might ask, was Dalip Singh deprived of the power, position and privilege which the British had granted to him by one treaty and undertaken to protect by another. The only logic which could be invoked was the logic of the strong towards the weak, which has been the corner-stone of British imperialism in India.

B. BURMA

The Panjāb was not the only military conquest of Dalhousie. Another victim was Burma. The occupation of Arākān and Tenāsserim, as a result of the First Burmese War, was merely the beginning of a process which, in its natural course of development, was bound to swallow up the rest of the kingdom. How this process usually worked is illustrated by the dealings of colonial European powers with Asiatic and African peoples. The commercial importance of Burma attracted English merchants. These unwelcome guests, conscious of their military strength and proud of their superior civilization, were arrogant in their demands and loud in their complaints against the Government of Burma. There were undoubtedly corruptions of local Burmese officials, and there was also some truth in the complaints. But if a body of people feel that they were not justly treated in a foreign land, ruled by different laws and procedure to which they could justly object, international law and practice, as understood and applied in Europe, alike prescribe that they might quit the land under protest. The policy and mora-

lity of the colonial Europeans in Asia were, however, different. They took for granted their inherent right to be wherever they chose, and also to establish their rights and prerogatives, as they conceived them, by either mending the ways of the recalcitrant Asiatic sovereigns, or, if necessary, by ending them, by the use of force. This truth was well illustrated in China less than a decade before Dalhousie arrived in India As it was connected with India, we may go into some details. The Chinese, foolishly enough as it seems, tried to stop the import of Indian Opium which was sapping the vitality of the whole nation. British army not only forced the opium down the throat of the Chinese, but also compelled them to pay a heavy indemnity, cede Hongkong, and make other concessions which facilitated future exploitation of the same kind (A.D. 1842). It is worth quoting, in full, the observations of a British historian on this disgraceful transaction. "Moralists of the severer type were unable to reconcile themselves to the arguments adduced in justification of the war. Ashley even brought forward a resolution for the suppression of the opium trade, but withdrew it after a debate turning on the inability of the Indian Government to part with a revenue of £ 1,000,000 or more."[3]

Lord Dalhousie was evidently not a moralist of the severer type, and certainly felt no scruple in upholding the most arbitrary act of violence on the part of his own officer against the ruler of Burma, even when he was convinced of its injustice This will be demonstrated by the detailed account of the circumstances leading to the second Burmese war, given in Chapter V. It is curious that as soon as Dalhousie gave a practical demonstration of his new forward policy by the annexation of the Panjāb, complaints of oppression began to pour in from the British merchants of Burma. Although the British residents in Burma alleged that they "had suffered for long time", they did not place their grievances seriously before the Government of India before 1851,[4] when Dalhousie's policy of annexation was at work in full swing. Another curious fact is that about the same time there was public agitation on the part of the British, through the press and on the platform, about the eminent desirability of conquering Burma.

Neither the local authorities nor the Government of India made any proper inquiry into the alleged charges against the Burmese officials. But Lord Dalhousie decided to demand reparation from the Government of Ava, and for this purpose sent Commodore Lambert of the Royal Navy with the ships under his command and other available vessels. The choice of such "diplomatic" mission to settle political disputes is perhaps unique. As soon as Lambert arrived

in Rangoon, no less than 38 new charges were made by the British residents against Burmese officials. So Lambert demanded the removal of the Governor of Rangoon. The Burmese Government sent a most conciliatory reply and even conceded the high-handed demand of Lambert by removing the Governor of Rangoon. But the old fable of the wolf and the lamb was repeated. A deputation sent by Lambert to the new Governor felt insulted at the manner of their reception. Immediately after receiving their report, and without asking for any explanation, Lambert blockaded the rivers of Rangoon, the Bassein and Salween, and seized a ship belonging to the king of Burma. The rest was, of course, a foregone conclusion. A full scale military expedition was sent to Burma. The Burmese were defeated and the important cities of Prome and Pegu were captured by the British forces. As the Burmese Government, though unable to fight, refused to sue for peace, Dalhousie annexed the province of Pegu, with some territory above Prome, by a formal proclamation on December 19, 1852.

C. AVADH

In addition to the Panjāb and Lower Burma, a third large province, namely, Oudh (now called Avadh) was annexed to the British dominions in India by Lord Dalhousie. No military expedition was necessary, and the mailed fist of Dalhousie was enough to coerce into submission the helpless ruler of Avadh, who had been recently elevated to the status of an independent king by the British themselves. The annexation of Avadh was the culminating act of a series of extortions and oppressions upon the hapless rulers or Avadh since the fateful day when Suja-ud-daulla asked for military help from Warren Hastings to conquer the neighbouring province of Rohilkhand. The subsequent history of Avadh is but the story of gradually increasing interference in its internal administration by the British, and their growing exactions, which reduced the country to an intolerable state of chaos and confusion. No doubt, the depraved character of the rulers contributed to no small extent to this miserable state of things, but this was largely the result of the dual government set up in Avadh, in which the British had all the power without any responsibility, and the Nawab had all the responsibility without any real power to deliver himself or his people from the Octopus of British hold. The successive acts in this tragic drama till the fall of the curtain on the eve of Dalhousie's departure from India (as a matter of fact, his term of office was extended in order that he might see the business through) will be related in Chapter XI. It will suffice to state here that probably no other act of Dalhousie received such a strong condemnation both in India and

England It is only fair to state that in equity the blame must be shared, to some extent, both by the authorities at home and the predecessors of Dalhousie in India. When Dalhousie appeared on the scene it was no longer the question of whether, but when, Avadh will be added to British India, and the utmost that can be said is that he merely quickened the process and thereby ended the prolonged agony of the king and the people of Avadh.

D ANNEXATIONS BY THE DOCTRINE OF LAPSE

In addition to the Panjāb, Burma and Avadh Lord Dalhousie's period of administration is marked by the annexation of a large number of other Indian States, both large and small, and escheat of dignitary titles and pensions, the last vestiges of once powerful and independent States. These were made by the mere fiat of the Paramount Power without any resort to, or even show of, force.

We may begin with the famous Doctrine of Lapse which accounts for the annexation of Satara, Nagpur, Jhansi and several smaller States, and the extinction of the nominal sovereignty of the Nawab of the Carnatic and the Raja of Tanjore.

There is a long-standing usage, sanctioned by religious scriptures, by which a Hindu, without any male issue, may, after observing some rites and ceremonies, adopt a son, subject to some prescribed restrictions in the choice of the person so adopted Such a son, simply by virtue of the process of adoption, becomes immediately possessed of all the rights and obligations, both secular and religious, of a son born of a legitimately wedded wife

So far as the law and general usage are concerned, every Hindu has the unrestricted right of adoption. This was also at first recognized by the British rulers In 1825 the British Government passed a formal resolution to the effect that "Sovereign princes in their own right have, by Hindu law, a right to adopt ..and that the British Government is bound to acknowledge the adoption[4a] Later, they held that so far as a dependent ruling chief was concerned, the power of adoption, according to prevailing custom, was subject to the consent of the suzerain authority The obvious practical implication was that no subordinate Hindu ruler could adopt a son without the previous consent of the British Government, and any adoption, so made, would be invalid, so far at least as succession to political rights was concerned Thus the Bombay Government resolved in 1831 to "continue to grant or to withhold its permission to adopt according to circumstances"[5]. In 1834, the Court of Directors issued the following directive for the guidance of the Indian Govern-

ment: "Wherever it is optional with you to give or to withhold your consent to adoptions, the indulgence should be the exception, not the rule, and should never be granted but as a special mark of favour and approbation."[6]

The method of practical application of this theory is not, however, quite so clear. In a large number of instances the Hindu ruler of a State, and in a few cases even his eldest widow, was allowed to adopt a son.[7] In more than one case, the British Government or its local agent was eager that a ruling chief, without any male issue, should make an adoption during his lifetime. Daulat Rao Sindhia died on March 20, 1827, without having adopted a son, but his widow Baiza Bai adopted Jankojee Rao on June 18, 1827. On the latter's death in 1843, the senior widow adopted Jayaji Rao, the nearest in blood. It has been justly observed that the British Government itself, in truth, had so thoroughly recognized the right, and supported it in the case of Hindu principalities, that 'actually there were many more successors by adoption in the Hindu royal houses than by direct descent, at the time that this universal privilege was denied to the Rajah of Satara '[8] John Sullivan says that in accordance with the Resolution of 1826 no less than fifteen instances of adoption by succession were recognized by the British government between the years 1826 and 1848, seven of which were made by reigning princes.[8a]

On the other hand a few instances may be cited in which adoption was set aside. One of the earliest cases of this nature occurred in Jhansi in 1835. Ram Chandra Rao, the Raja of Jhansi, died after adopting a son without the sanction of the British Government, and his claim to succession was passed over in favour of Raghunath Rao, an uncle of the deceased ruler. But, as will be shown later, the adoption was set aside, not because it had not the sanction of the British Government behind it, but probably on the ground that it was irregular, i.e. it did not fulfil all the conditions prescribed for adoption in Hindu Scriptures. In any case the invalidity of adoption did not lead to annexation. The next is the case of Jalaun in Bundelkhand, where an adoption was allowed in 1832, but in 1840 Ellenborough refused to sanction a second adoption and the State lapsed to the British Government.[9] Jalaun, however, be it noted, was really a *jāgīr*, rather than a sovereign principality. The next case is that of Colaba. Its ruler, Raghoji Angria, concluded, in 1822, a treaty with the British by which "the entire supremacy" and the "right of investiture" were expressly reserved to the British Government. In 1841, standing on the right of investiture, Lord Auckland refused to permit an

adopted son to succeed. This action has been condemned on the ground that "this right of investiture was not a right of arbitrary resumption, or of escheat on failure of lineal heirs".[10] Whatever one might think of this argument, the case of Colaba undoubtedly stands by itself and cannot create a precedent, in view of the express stipulation reserving the right of investiture to the British Government. The small State of Mandavi also lapsed. Mandavi was a small State in Bombay, consisting of the town of that name on the Tapti with 162 villages. It was founded by a Bhil chief and owed allegiance to the Peshwa. In 1803 it became tributary to the British. As the last chief died without issue, and even the most legitimate claimant was very remotely connected with him by blood, the Government of India, with the full approval of the Court of Directors, annexed the State. The Bill for the purpose was introduced during the regime of Hardinge though the Act was not finally passed till 1848, after Dalhousie had taken over charge.[11]

The whole policy of sanctioning adoption by Indian rulers was thoroughly discussed by the Government of India in 1837, when Raja Tej Singh Bahadur of Orchha applied for grant of recognition to his adopted son, Sujan Singh, as his heir and successor.[12] Mr Fraser, the Political Agent of Bundelkhand, collected all possible information and precedents and submitted a comprehensive review of the general question of succession. He did not deny the right of adoption, but contended, that before recognizing it the British Government should carefully consider the claims of collateral heirs as well as the rights and interests of the Paramount Power. "He did not find any reason why the right of the latter to resume hereditary territories in the absence of lineal descendants should not be asserted and enforced".[13] Sir Charles Metcalfe, who was then the Lieutenant Governor of N.W.P., did not accept this view, for he thought that Fraser ignored the differences between the sovereign princes and the *Jāgīrdārs*. The former, he said, "had a right to adopt to the exclusion of their collaterals and the so-called reversionary rights of the Paramount Power in accordance with the laws of the land. In their cases, the British Government was bound to acknowledge adoptions, if they were regular and not in violation of their customary legal tenets. In the cases of the second category of states, the Paramount Power was entitled to limit successions according to the terms of the grants which were, in general, confined only to the legitimate sons and consequently precluded adoptions." To Metcalfe it seemed that the "Raja of Orchha was a sovereign Prince, and being a Hindu, he was fully entitled to adopt a son and successor in the absence of his own. He regarded the adoption made by the Raja as an unobjectionable arrangement". He disputed the statement of

Fraser that the former decisions of the British Government in acknowledging successions in the States of Bundelkhand were incoherent, and said that the one underlying principle, which generally operated on such occasions, had been that of non-interference in the internal affairs of the Indian States by which a succession, apparently agreeable to the Prince and the people or to the latter on the demise of the former, was recognized.[14]

Before the case of adoption by the ruler of Orchha was finally decided, it was complicated by his alleged complicity with a subordinate *Jāgīrdār* in his rebellion against the British authority. Nevertheless, the case was regarded so important that the question of the political status of Orchha was discussed threadbare by the Executive Council of the Governor-General.

Both Fraser and Maddock, the Secretary to the Government of India, doubted if Orchha was ever regarded as a sovereign State. Metcalfe expressed the view that the ruler of Orchha was a sovereign prince and was fully entitled to adopt a son. Lord Auckland endorsed this view. "In support of his contention, he recalled the preamble to the treaty with Orchha, concluded on the 23rd December, 1842, which clearly defined the status of its ruler whose ancestors had been holding the state since ancient times without paying tribute or acknowledging vassalage to any other power. The treaty was designated as one of friendship and alliance by which the state was guaranteed to its ruler and his heirs and successors. In view of these clear terms, Lord Auckland considered it impossible to raise any doubt as to the status of the Raja and decided to regard him as a sovereign Prince who was entitled, as suggested by Metcalfe on the 28th October, 1837, to make an adoption which the British Government was legally bound to recognize, provided that the adoption was regular and not in violation of the Hindu Law".[16]

Two members of the Executive Council wrote minutes about this case. W. W. Bird subscribed to the views of Lord Auckland and saw no reason to depart from the well-established policy. "H. T. Prinsep was of opinion that the states of Bundelkhand in their relations with the British Government were not better than the protected states of other regions. Among them, Orchha belonged to a superior class like the ruler of Rewa in Baghelkhand. Having no natural heir, the Raja provided for succession and he had every right to do so even to the exclusion of the claims of his collaterals. Being an old inheritance, neither of British creation nor a product of the Peshwa's bounty to whose rights the company had succeeded, the British Government was not entitled to claim the Raj as a lapse on failure of a direct heir to the prejudice of his right to adopt

or of the rights of his collecterals to succeed. He treated this case as quite different from that of Jalaun which was only a jagir and a subordinate province of the Peshwa to which only direct descendants from the first *Subedār* could have a just claim to succeed".[16]

Thus Lord Auckland, W. W. Bird, H. T. Prinsep and C. T. Metcalfe held more or less the same view, while those of Fraser and Maddock were different. The view of the Governor-General therefore prevailed as the decision of the Supreme Government, and the right of the ruler of Orchha to adopt a child as his heir and successor was formally acknowledged.

The view so strongly expressed by Lord Auckland in sanctioning adoption by the ruler of Orchha acquires a special significance when we remember that the titular dignity of the Nawabs of Surat was extinguished in August 1842, and that on this occasion Lord Auckland's Government endorsed the general principle of "abandoning no just and honourable accession of territory or revenue, while all existing claims of right are at the same time scrupulously maintained.".[17]

Such was the situation when Lord Dalhousie took over the administration of India The principle on which Lord Dalhousie acted, and which was supported by the authorities at home, was explained by him in several minutes He classified the Indian States into three categories, namely (1) the creation of the British Government, (2) tributary and subordinate, and (3) independent He laid down as a general principle that no adoption should be permitted to the first, no adoption without previous consent should be recognized in the case of the second, while there should be no interference in the case of the third[18]

The legitimacy, morality, and expediency of this doctrine of lapse have been discussed at length by various authorities, but there is no consensus of opinion on the subject There is no doubt that the adoption, involving the right to succeed like an ordinary child, was an approved custom among the Hindus, sanctioned by ancient law; and there is no clear reason or precedent, sufficiently strong, to set it aside as obsolete or illegal The only support in Hindu scriptures for the theory, that a valid adoption requires the sanction of the king, is furnished by a dictum in the *Vasishtha Samhitā* which, according to Colebrooke's *Digest*, lays down that a person, before making adoption, "must give humble notice to the king"[19] The actual passage in the Dharmasūtra of Vaśishṭha (XV.6) has been translated as follows

"He who desires to adopt a son, shall assemble his kinsmen, announce his intention to the king, make burnt offerings......"[20]

The announcement of intention to the king is somewhat analogous to the 'registration' of a document, to ensure its bonafide character, and cannot, by any stretch of imagination, convey that no adoption is valid without the sanction of the king. Indeed, so little importance was attached to this detail, that no other ancient text contains it.

As to precedents, no one has been able to point out a single clear instance supporting the contention of the British Government. Bell asserts that "neither the kings of Delhi nor the Peshwas ever exercised or claimed the right of forbidding adoption in the families of dependent chieftains"; at least "there is not a single case on record." The following observations of Bell have not been refuted so far by any cogent argument.

"The prerogative of recognising or refusing to recognise the adopted son of a native prince never belonged to the paramount power in India. The assumption of such prerogative is historically false. Neither the doctrine nor the practice has yet been proved by any authentic record. The summary of Hindu laws and customs in the Deccan printed by the order of Elphinstone in 1826 sanctions adoption, even by the widow, who may adopt one of the husband's relations, with their concurrence and with that of the caste, who will be the heir. This was the opinion of the Resident in the case of Daulat Rao Sindhia who died without adopting a son in 1827. His widow Baiza Bai, who would have postponed adoption in order to keep authority in her own hands required the pressure of the Resident to adopt Jankoji Rao Sindhia on June 18, 1827. Jankoji died in 1843 without adoption, but the senior widow adopted Jayaji Rao Sindhia The same opinion was given by Col. Sutherland, Governor-General's agent in Central India, in the case of the petty Rajput State of Kishengarh:

"The British Government has on many occasions introduced limitations into those clauses of treaty which guaranteed hereditary descent such as legitimate offspring (Rao of Cutch in 1819), descendants (Jhullawur in 1838), the heirs male of his body (Ghulab Singh of Kashmir) and even so late as 1856 in the proposed treaty with Oudh the succession was to be confined to the heirs male of his body born in lawful wedlock. It follows that when a treaty contains no such restriction no rule except that of Hindu law in all its integrity can have been contemplated by either party."

Bell also categorically maintains 'that the Adoption despatch itself tacitly acknowledged, that the imaginary precedents for ignoring adoption by ruling chiefs could not be found; did not in fact exist'.[21] Lee Warner has pointed out, by way of precedents, that the Peshwa usually sold the *Sanad*, or title to adopt, to the highest

bidder. He charged a *nazarana* or succession duty. From this he draws the inference that British Government had a perfect right either to follow this precedent or to introduce some other plan in regard to succession.[22] This is a queer inference, to say the least of it. Some have quoted precedents where *Jāgīrdārs*, or persons of still lower category, had to obtain the consent of the rulers before adoption.[23] One can hardly regard them as evidence of an established custom, applicable to ruling chiefs *vis à vis* their suzerains. At least not a single concrete instance in support of such custom has been brought forward. On the other hand, it has to be admitted that the validity of such principle or custom was not clearly recognized by the Indians at any time, and the mere *ex parte* decision of the British could not create it. The Doctrine of Lapse, and the annexations based upon it, particularly those of Satara, Jhansi and Nagpur, were undoubtedly regarded as complete innovations all over India, and as abrogations of a right enjoyed by the ruling chiefs in India for a long time. Admitting that the British Government adopted the principle in theory, for its own guidance, as far back as 1831, or even earlier, it does not necessarily follow that an action based on the fiat of executive authority was right, or proper, or thereby created any legal sanction. None of the numerous treaties, concluded between the British and the Indian States, expressly referred to the invalidity of adoption made without the consent of the former, and there was no legal enactment to that effect. It is interesting to note that the legal point involved in the Doctrine of Lapse did actually come up for decision before a judicial tribunal. In the important case of Bhasker Buchajee Vs. Naroo Rugonath (Select Reports, 24) it was decided "that want of the permission of the ruling authorities is an insufficient ground for setting aside an adoption once made with the proper ceremonies."[24]

In view of all this it is difficult to maintain that the British Government was within its rights, merely by an executive fiat, in the absence of any legislation, to annul the adoption of an Indian ruler, and to annex his State on the ground of failure of male issue.

So far as the morality or expediency of this doctrine is concerned, it is, of course, a matter of opinion, and arguments have been advanced both for and against it. But a few points may be noted. Lord Dalhousie's confident assertions that the change of rule in Nāgpur, Avadh and other annexed provinces was hailed by the population as a blessing, and that not "a murmur was heard beyond the palace walls",[25] were erroneous and unfounded. The great excitement at Nāgpur and the popular support of the civil commotion at

Avadh, during the outbreak of 1857-8, sufficiently testify to the feelings of the people on the annexation of these provinces by the British. That great outbreak also proves, in an indirect manner, that the Doctrine of Lapse was regarded as highly inexpedient, if not immoral and illegitimate. For, shortly after it, the British Government voluntarily wrote to the ruling chiefs of India, assuring them of the full and unrestricted right of adoption. On this occasion Sir Charles Wood wrote in his despatch to the Government of India dated July 26, 1860, that the British Government should practically demonstrate that "we are as willing to respect the rights of others as we are capable of maintaining our own". He thus practically conceded that the Indian States had a right to adopt.

Fortunately or unfortunately for Dalhousie, he had to deal with a number of cases, involving a decision on the right of adoption.

1. *Sātārā*

The Raja of Sātāra died in 1848. He had no male issue, but adopted a son without the previous consent of the British Government. It was a clear case to be decided on the principle laid down by Dalhousie, but some complications arose in view of the language of the treaty which created the State. It conferred the State on the first Raja "and his heirs and successors". It was contended that this implied the right of the adopted son to succeed, as he was unquestionably an heir. A few members of the Governor-General's Council objected to the annexation, and the whole question was referred to the Court of Directors who agreed with the view of the majority, in favour of annexation, as "being in accordance with the general law and custom of India".[26] Sātārā was accordingly annexed and the claim of adopted son set aside.

2. *Jhansi*

Gangadhar Rao, Raja of Jhansi, died on November 20, 1853. On November 19, he decided to adopt a son and sent a communication to this effect to Major Ellis, the Assistant Political Agent of Bundelkhand. The ceremony of adoption was actually performed on the 20th Ellis received the Raja's letter on that date and saw him. The dying Gangadhar Rao requested him to try his best to secure the approval of the Government to this adoption, and also wrote to Malcolm to the same effect. In this letter he referred to the article 2 of the treaty of 1817 which recognized Ramchandra Rao and his heirs and successors as rulers of Jhansi. In 1817 the Peshwa Baji Rao II transferred his interests and pretensions in Bundelkhand to the British Government by the Treaty of Poona. The territories

in the possession of the Subahdar of Jhansi were confirmed by the British Government "in perpetuity" to his grandson Ramchandra Rao, "his heirs and successors", by the treaty of 1817. The preamble and the first article of the treaty of 1817 prove that the treaty of 1804 was in full force during the first three years of Ramchandra Rao's reign, and that a new treaty was only concluded "in consequence" of the altered relations of the British with the Peshwa. There was no gift, because Ramchandra Rao was already in possession; there was no pretension to the relations between sovereign and subject, for there already existed relations of amity and defensive alliance. Lord Dalhousie is therefore clearly wrong when he says (in para 6 of his minute) that Jhansi was "held by a Chief under very recent grant from the British as sovereign", (and in para 12) "such as is issued by a sovereign to a subject". It is true that the Chief was made Raja in 1832, but the inferior title of Subahdar involves no inferiority in sovereign power or hereditary right. Sindhia, Holkar and Gaekwar were originally Subahdars and feudatories of the Peshwa like the Subahdar of Jhansi.

In paras 7 and 11 of Dalhousie's minute it is said that Rao Ramchandra did adopt a boy, but the British Government did not acknowledge the boy as successor, and this is cited as a precedent for refusing to sanction adoption But the fact is that there was a disputed succession in 1835, there being four claimants. The Secretary to Government refers to it as follows: "On this occasion the lawful heir by blood, descended of the body of Sheo Ram Bhow, was recognised as successor to the Raj, to the disallowance of a boy alleged to have been adopted or nominated as successor by the late Rajah the day before his death, who, if adopted, would have been unquestionably the heir to any property of his adoptive father to the exclusion of the uncle; and this was done without enquiry into the fact of adoption or nomination (which was doubtful) as though it was an immaterial circumstance." On that occasion the question of annulling adoptions was not even discussed.[26a]

In the inquiry which preceded the annexation of Jhansi reference is made both by Dalhousie and the Secretary to the views of Metcalfe. But as will be seen from the observations of Metcalfe, quoted above, they go definitely against the views of Dalhousie. In a letter, dated 16-2-1854, the widowed Rani Lakshmi Bai, destined to attain immortal fame four years later, wrote a long letter to the Governor-General. After referring to the loyal services rendered to the British by the past rulers of the family, the Rani drew the attention of the Governor-General to the article 2 of the treaty of

1817 referred to above. She pointed out that two different words—*Warisān* and *Janisinān*—have been used to denote the heirs and successors, of which the first means normal heirs but the second includes adopted sons.

But before the end of February, 1854, Dalhousie decided to annex Jhansi on the ground that there was no male heir. He stressed the point that the ruler of Jhansi was originally a provincial Governor and cannot be regarded as a ruling chief. He also pointed out that the adopted son of a previous ruler, Ramchandra Rao, was also not recognized as his heir.

Lord Dalhousie's reference to the status of the ruler of Jhansi is very misleading. The relevant facts may be summed up as follows:

Jhansi formed a part of the dominions of the Peshwa. Its ruler, Shib Rao Bhao, however, rendered signal service to the British during the Second Maratha War. In recognition of these services, the British Government, in 1804, while formally recognizing the sovereign rights of the Peshwa, made a treaty of defensive alliance with his nominal tributary, Shib Rao Bhao, the Subahdar of Jhansi.

3. *Sambalpur*

Narayan Singh, the ruler of Sambalpur, died in 1849. His widow Rani Mukhyapan Devi assumed the reins of Government, but Lord Dalhousie set aside her claim, and as the late ruler had left no male issue, annexed Sambalpur to the British dominions. It was alleged that no adoption had ever been proposed, and that Narayan Singh, the last ruler, had, during his lifetime, expressly intimated his wish that the British Government should take possession of his principality and provide for his Rani.[26b]

4. *Nāgpur*

The Raja of Nāgpur died in 1853. He had no male heir and did not actually adopt any son. Dalhousie regarded Nāgpur as a State belonging to the first category mentioned above, i.e., a creation of the British, and therefore recommended its annexation. But, as will be shown later, Dalhousie's presumptions were wrong, and many of his advisers opposed it on general principles based on the well-known views of Elphinstone, Monroe and Metcalfe. The question was referred to the Court of Directors who supported the Governor-General. Nāgpur was accordingly annexed to the British dominions.

5. *General Review*

In all these cases the ultimate responsibility for escheat and annexation rests, at least technically, on the shoulders of the autho-

rities at home, and Dalhousie cannot be held responsible for it. Still, as he held very strong views in favour of annexation which must have largely influenced the opinion at home, he cannot altogether escape the praise or blame for these transactions.

In fairness to Dalhousie, and in order to form a just opinion of the share of responsibility belonging to each of the parties concerned, it is necessary to refer to some of the views expressed in connection with the annexation of Sātārā which was the first case that had to be dealt with by Dalhousie under the Doctrine of Lapse. The contingency arose when Appa Sahib, the Raja of Sātārā, died on April 5, 1848. But long before that event, Sir John Carnac, the Governor of Bombay, anticipated the later decision. When Pratap Singh, the Raja of Sātārā, was deposed in 1839, as described in Chapter VI, Carnac recommended that Appa Sahib, the brother of the ex-Raja, should be appointed his successor. While making this proposal he pointed out that neither the ex-Raja nor his brother had any children or were likely to have any, and then significantly added "It follows, therefore, that on the demise of the new Raja the Sātārā State would lapse to the British Government".[27] Nor were the home authorities less emphatic on the point. Hobhouse, who at that time presided over the Board of Commissioners for the affairs of India, popularly known as the Board of Control, expressed his views as follows in a letter which he wrote to Dalhousie on December 24, 1847:

"The death of the ex-Raja of Sātārā certainly comes at a very opportune moment. The reigning Raja, I hear, is in very bad health, and it is not at all impossible we may soon have to decide upon the fate of his territory I have a very strong opinion that on the death of the present prince without a son, no adoption should be permitted, and this petty principality should be merged in the British Empire, and if the question is decided in my "day of sextonship", I shall leave no stone unturned to bring about that result. But, of course, I should like to have your opinion on the subject".[28]

It is difficult to conceive of a stronger pressure from a higher authority on a subordinate, who had just assumed the office of the Governor-General and had not yet formulated his views on the subject. No wonder, therefore, that in a minute, dated August 30, 1848, Dalhousie laid down his views as follows: "I hold that on all occasions where heirs natural shall fail, the territory should be made to lapse and adoption should not be permitted, excepting in those cases in which some strong political reason may render it expedient to depart from this general rule".[29]

As noted above, Dalhousie later modified his policy, and varied it in accordance with the status of the State under consideration. But the views quoted above leave no doubt that annexation by lapse was the generally approved policy, both in India and at home, though there were some Indian officials who held a contrary view. Thus Sir George Clarke, the Governor of Bombay, and six members of the Court of Directors were against the annexation of Sātārā.[30]

As regards the purely legal aspect, the case of Sātārā is highly instructive. Some English writers have held that it was a well-established principle in India, and the Hindu Law clearly laid down, that the adopted son of a subordinate or dependent ruler had no right to inherit public property, as opposed to private estates, without the sanction of the suzerain authority.[31] But, as already noted above,[32] no evidence has been cited in support of such a categorical assertion, and its truth may be doubted. But this issue seems to be irrelevant in the case of Sātārā. For, by no stretch of imagination, can it be regarded as a dependent State. The Company's own proclamation, dated 1818, declared that "the Rajah of Sattara, who is now a prisoner in Baji Rao's hands, will be released, and placed at the head of an independent sovereignty...." The Treaty concluded between the restored Raja of Sātārā and the British is quite in accordance with this declaration. "All its language seems that of a convention between equals,....Furthermore, the wordings of the articles reinforce the notion of sovereign equality". For the Raja is called "*Chhatrapati*", an ancient term denoting independent sovereignty. What is more relevant to the present issue, the Treaty, mentioned above, clearly establishes the right of perpetual succession without any hindrance. "The words in the original for "sons, heirs, and successors" are Persian vocables and phrases, the first implying an own son, the next answering to the idea of an adopted son, the third applicable to "assigns", representatives, or a regency". "The word 'perpetuity' also *sudodit* could not have been rendered stronger, for the vernacular implies "for ever" "as long as the sun and moon endure". As Arnold justly remarks: "It is difficult to see how an instrument could better assure to a Hindoo prince the rights and the various modes of succession common to Hindu thrones"[33]

Bell observes: In the case of setting aside the adoption of Appa Sahib, the Raja of Sātārā, next to that of Colaba, every authority, including Dalhousie, referred to the opinion of Willoughby. This gentleman always refers to a series of precedents going back to the "Imperial house of Delhi" for "the universal and immemorial custom of India", but does not cite a single precedent or a single document except that of Colaba. Willoughby asserts that the Treaty

of 1819 with the Raja of Sātārā "limited the succession to the descendants of the party on whom it was gratuitously conferred". In that treaty there is no such thing. It was a treaty of "perpetual friendship and alliance" with the Raja of Sātārā, his heirs and successors, and contains nothing whatever to restrain the operation of the ordinary law of inheritance. Sir George Clerk, Governor of Bombay, accepted this interpretation and recognized the adopted boy as successor. In the discussion before the Court of Directors and the Board of Control in London, the adoption was supported by a strong minority who made written protests. Mr. R. D. Mangles, the only member on the opposite side who gave a written reply, quoted as a precedent the case of Krishna Rao whose father by adoption had received a grant of a *nemnook* which was refused him by the Gaekwar. A *nemnook* is a hereditary pension in money, usually connected with some honorary or sinecure office. The document granting an annuity to the family of a subject and servant is compared by him with a treaty of perpetual friendship and alliance made with a sovereign, "his heirs and successors", and he refers to this treaty as an agreement. Mangles' argument shows that the supporters of Dalhousie were in fearful straits for a precedent.[33a]

The annexation of Sātārā was "a blow to such reputation for straightforwardness as the Company still possessed". Mr. Elphinstone was shocked beyond measure, and "the treatment of the Satara Sovereignty as a *Jageer,* he regarded as a monstrous one".[34]

As regards Nāgpur, Dalhousie wrote an elaborate minute, dated January 28, 1854, in which he proved, to his own satisfaction, that Nāgpur was a dependent State conferred by the British upon Raghuji Bhonsle, his heirs and successors, and that he had died without heirs natural or adopted, leaving no one who had a claim to the sovereignty.[35] "The simple question", said Dalhousie, "for determination is, whether the sovereignty of Nāgpur, which was bestowed as a gift upon a Goojur by the British Government in 1818, should now be conferred upon somebody else as a gift a second time".[36] The question was not, however, really so simple. The State of Nāgpur cannot be regarded as a dependent State, created by the British, and conferred by them upon Raghuji Bhonsle. It was an ancient Marāthā State which, by rights of the Treaty of 1803, stood *in the same relation with the British* as the States of Sindhia and *Holkar. It is* true that the ruler of Nāgpur rose against the British in 1818, and the British Government might have, in consequence, annexed it in 1818, or granted it for life, or made any other arrangement. But they did nothing of the kind, and acknowledged the ruler as a suzerain and guaranteed to him, and to "his heirs and

successors", the State of Nāgpur without any new limitation or qualification. This arrangement was confirmed by a special treaty in 1826, by which certain provinces were ceded to the British "for ever", which expression obviously applies also to the portion that was left and constituted the Nāgpur State.[37]

The other assertion of Dalhousie, that the late Raja made no adoption and there was no claimant to the throne, leading to the more categorical assertion, that the "Raja never adopted a son, and his Ranees neither adopted nor expressed any intention of doing so,"[38] can only be regarded as one of those clever half-truths which are deliberately designed to mislead the unwary reader. The fact is that Raghuji Bhonsle III, Raja of Nāgpur, who died in 1853 after a few days' illness, had decided to adopt his grand-nephew, Appa Sahib. He was the nearest collateral heir to the throne, and was chosen to succeed in default of heir-male of the body. He had been brought up in the palace in a way suitable to the dignity of an heir apparent. His mother had given birth to the lad in the palace and a royal salute of 21 guns was given at his birth. He was always seated by the Maharaja's side at all court ceremonials. The king had deferred formally adopting him, probably entertaining the hope of having a son of his own; he was forty-seven when he died, and might therefore still expect progeny.[39] But before his death, he frequently represented to the Resident that there was no probability of his having any issue and that therefore he should be permitted to adopt a son as successor to the Raj and territory of Nāgpur, according to the treaty, and according to the custom of the family.[40] Immediately after the death of the Raja, the boy was adopted formally by the senior widowed Rani, when the parents of the boy formally handed him over to her.[41] The funeral ceremonies and rites of the late Raja were duly performed by Appa Sahib as the adopted son.

The widows of the deceased Raja notified the adoption to the Resident, but suspended the usual pomp and ceremonies, observed on such occasions, pending the formal permission of the British Government. The Ranis frequently requested the Resident to accord the necessary sanction, and submitted three memorials to the Governor-General on the subject. They pointed out that the formal adoption was only "suspended to please the Sircar (Government)", and "should not be construed by it as having been abandoned."[42]

These facts show the misleading character of the assumptions made by Dalhousie and his apologists, that the Raja of Nāgpur never adopted a son, and his Ranis neither adopted nor expressed any in-

tention of doing so. Indeed such a position would appear almost incredible to those who are familiar with the notions, practices and customs of the ruling families of India at the time. The defence of Dalhousie and his apologists in regard to the annexation of Nāgpur is thus not only the weakest of its kind, but may even be regarded as dishonest. It also conveniently ignores the fact that there were cases on record within recent memory where, as in the case of Sindhia family, the widowed Ranis, on two successive occasions, in 1827 and 1843, were not only permitted, but even urged to adopt, as already mentioned above.

As a matter of fact, the widowed Ranis of Nāgpur were denied any hearing on their behalf. Dalhousie suppressed all references to their petition for adoption and had the hardihood to say that there was no claimant to the throne. This was bad enough, but was rendered far worse by the statement of some of his apologists to the effect that after the decision of Government in favour of annexation, and after the death of the senior widow at the close of the year 1855, the Ranis adopted Appa Sahib, and "of course antedated his adoption "[43] No comment is called for on this outrageous statement. Bell's observations on Dalhousie's minute, dated January 28, 1854, are worth quoting.

The Nagpur dominions were not annexed by the Company, and then conferred as a gift on the late Raja. It was administered during his minority in his name by British officers until he attained majority in 1826 when a treaty was concluded in which he was expressly declared to have "succeeded" to the musnud of Nagpur and in which he was required to confirm former cessions, which of course would never have been required or permitted had he received the principality as a gift or new grant The late Raja was a Gujar, but he was also the grandson of Raghuji Bhonsle II The treaty of 1826 guaranteed the Nagpur dominions to the Raja, "his heirs and successors " "Wherever we have guaranteed a Principality to a Hindu prince, "his heirs and successors," surely there can be no doubt that no law of inheritance except the Hindu law in all its integrity was ever contemplated by either party to the treaty. And the addition of the word "successors" indicates that the protecting power claims no right to interfere in the domestic policy of the reigning family, except so far as it is entitled to do so by the express stipulations of the treaty". "The word "heirs" is used in all European and Indian treaties, to denote the regular succession in the reigning family; the word "successors"—translated in Persian *"jae nisheenan"*, literally "sitters in the place",—while including all heirs, is used to denote the succession of *sovereign power"* (Napoleon is not

an heir but a successor of the Bourbons).[43a] Bell fully endorses the statements, made above, about the adoption of Appa Sahib (subsequently called Janoojee Bhonsle).[43b]

In considering the above concrete instances, where the Doctrine of Lapse was invoked to justify annexation, it is necessary to bear in mind one important principle. Even supposing that the adoptions were invalid, and there was no male heir of the body, do they necessarily empower or even justify the British to annex these States, far less impose a solemn obligation to do so? It might be argued, on the analogy of private States, that it would have been a more equitable course, on failure of normal succession, to find out the heir next in kin, or appoint a successor in accordance with the tradition of the family or custom of the locality Hindu rules of succession go very far in this direction, and failing everything else, a suitable choice could always be made in consultation with the family.

This important consideration was overlooked, or rather deliberately ignored, for there is no doubt that the annexations, though claimed and justified on legal right, were really based upon other considerations This is quite clear from the policy which Dalhousie himself enunciated, as far back as 1848, when he wrote:

'I cannot conceive it possible for any one to dispute the policy of seizing the advantage of any just opportunity for *consolidating* the territories that already belong to us, by taking possession of states *which may lapse* in the midst of them; for thus getting rid of these petty intervening principalities, which may be a means of annoyance, but which can never, I venture to think, be a source of strength; for adding to the resources of the public treasury, and for extending the universal application of our system of Government to those whose best interests, I sincerely believe, will be promoted thereby.[44]

In other words, Dalhousie "resolved—acting upon an old theory, be it said—to take kingdoms in wherever they made a gap in the red line running round his dominions, or broke its internal continuity."[44a] Even if we give the most liberal interpretation to his words, annexation is justified because it adds to the consolidation of the British dominion by completing the circle of the red line, or is otherwise advantageous to its administration. His observations on each of the annexed States from this point of view are worth quoting.[45]

1. SATARA. "The territories lie in the very heart of our possessions. They are interposed between the two principal military stations in the Presidency of Bombay, and are at least calculat-

ed, in the hands of an independent sovereign, to form an obstacle to safe communication and combined military movements. The district is fertile, and the revenue productive. By incorporating Sātārā with our possessions we should acquire continuity of military communication, and increase the revenues of the State."

2. JHANSI. "It lies in the midst of other British districts, and the possession of it as our own will tend to the improvement of the general internal administration of our possessions in Bundelkhand".

3. NĀGPUR. "Its incorporation, however, with the British Empire would extinguish a Government having separate feelings and interests, and would absorb a separate military power out of which there must always be a possibility that embarrassment, if not anxiety, might some day arise. The incorporation of Nagpur would give to us territory which comprises 80,000 sq. miles producing an annual revenue of forty lacs of Rupees and containing more than four million of people who have long desired to return to our rule. It would completely surround with British territory the dominions of his Highness the Nizam . It would render continuous several British provinces between which foreign territory is now interposed.....It would place the only direct line of communication which exists between Calcutta and Bombay almost within British territory.... To sum up all in one sentence, the possession of Nagpur would combine our military strength, would enlarge our commercial resources, and would materially tend to consolidate our power".

4. Sambalpur was surrounded by British territory.

There were, however, several who opposed these annexations on the ground of expediency. Sir George Clerk and Colonel Low opposed Dalhousie's policy in the Council. They contended that "dependent states were useful, inasmuch as they afforded employment to a native nobility and turbulent spirits who would not be employed by us, and who would sink into 'the dead level' of the population under our rule; that absorption of native states would therefore create discontent among a large body of men; that the rulers of other native states would be alarmed by these annexations, fearing the application of the same doctrines to their own successions; a childless ruler would feel no interest in the future well-being of his state and might even be tempted to extort as much as possible from his subjects during his lifetime; that our territory was already large enough, and that natives prefer their own rulers to the British Government."[46]

"Sleeman was strongly against annexation, and warned Lord Dalhousie in writing 'that the annexation of Oude would cost the British power more than the value of ten such kingdoms, and would inevitably lead to a mutiny of the sepoys', a prediction he died just too soon to see fulfilled. He held, as others of his way of thinking did, that the native states were 'breakwaters, and when they are all swept away, we shall be left to the mercy of our native army, which may not always be sufficiently under our control."[47] Lord Stanley also unequivocally condemned the annexation policy.[48] Sir Henry Russell, Malcolm, and Elphinstone expressed, respectively, the following views on the subject: "I consider the extinction of a Native State as a nail driven into our coffin"; "Tranquillity, not to say security, of our power will be hazarded in proportion as the territories of native princes and chiefs fall under our direct rule"; "The period of our downfall in India will probably be hastened by every increase of our territory and subjects."[48a]

It would appear that the question of annexation was fought more on the grounds of expediency than on any abstract principle of invalidity of adoption or consequent lapse of succession. This is supported, among other things, by the following passage in a minute of Dalhousie recommending the annexation of Nāgpur: "I conscientiously declare that unless I believed that the prosperity and happiness of its inhabitants would be promoted by their being placed permanently under British rule, no other advantages which would arise out of the measure would move me to propose it."[49] The expression, "other advantages", in the above passage, of course, refers to the advantages accruing to the British as mentioned above. We may well believe that Dalhousie was really influenced by these two considerations. The legal aspect of adoption and lapse was merely invoked as a just excuse, and utilised as a good opportunity of carrying out what he desired on other grounds. In short, the motive behind the annexations of Dalhousie was exactly the same which induced Sir Charles Napier and Ellenborough to annex Sindh. Dalhousie, however, could always show a plausible excuse, whereas the others were less fortunate in this respect, and so their actions partook of the character of aggressive spoliation. That Dalhousie was prepared, if need be, to follow their example, is proved by his annexation of Avadh and Lower Burma to which reference has been made above.

Dalhousie's administration witnessed the climax as well as the end of a new era of annexation. Whatever one might think of Dalhousie's personal share in the series of annexations noted above, there is some truth in Sleeman's statement, quoted above, that the new

generations of officers formed a school "characterised by impatience at the existence of any native State, and its strong and often insane advocacy of their absorption." He adds that "there is no pretext, however weak, that is not sufficient, in their estimation, for the purpose (of annexation); and no war, however cruel, that is not justifiable, if it has only this object in view."[50]

In respect of one Indian State, Dalhousie could not carry the Directors with him. The Raja of Kerauli, a State on the border of Rājputāna, died in July, 1852, after adopting a boy without the sanction of the British Government, and Dalhousie recommended its annexation. He held that it was a State of the Second Class, mentioned above, and subordinate to the British, as by the third article of the treaty, Kerauli specifically admitted the British supremacy. The Court of Directors, however, held that Kerauli was only a protected ally, and refused to interfere in the adoption. Kerauli was saved, but here, too, expediency, rather than legal right, decided the issue. Lord Dalhousie, though recommending annexation on the Doctrine of Lapse, took care to point out to the Directors that "the state is isolated, and would not consolidate our territories as in the case of Satara." He added: "Though not a very old State, still it is a Rajput principality, and unlike the existing Maratha and Muhammadan dynasties, has the claim of antiquity in its favour. The refusal of sanction to adoption in the case of Kerauli might create alarm and dissatisfaction in the older and more powerful states in Rajputana, as being apparently significant of the intention of the British Government towards themselves."[51] This again clearly shows that Dalhousie was influenced less by abstract legal rights or justice and more by considerations of expediency.

Two other petty States, namely, Baghat and Udaipur (to be distinguished from the State of Mewār with its capital of the name), which were annexed by Dalhousie, respectively in 1851 and 1852, were afterwards restored to native rule. As they illustrate how the Mutiny of 1857 had brought about a change in the policy of annexation by lapse, their history may be noted beyond the period under review.

The ruler of Baghat showed unfriendly attitude towards the British during the Nepāl War of 1815. For this offence three-fourths of his estate were forfeited and sold to Patiala, and the remaining portion was restored to its ruler, Mahendra Singh. On his death without issue in 1839, Auckland treated his estate as a lapse, but the Court of Directors did not approve of it and Ellenborough restored a part of it to his brother Bijay Singh. This ruler having died in 1849 without issue, Dalhousie referred to the Court of Direc-

tors whether they intended to recognize the custom of collateral successions in the Hill States of the Panjāb. The Court replied that as a matter of right none but a descendant of Mahendra Singh was entitled to succeed, the succession of Bijay Singh being merely an act of grace. Dalhousie, to whom the final decision was left, annexed the State, but the family of the deceased ruler refused to accept the pension in order to keep open their claim. After the Mutiny Canning entered into a new arrangement by which the son of a first cousin of Bijay Singh became a tributary ruler, and the State of Baghat was granted to him and the "heirs of his body" by a new *sanad* in 1862.[52]

Udaipur was a tributary and subordinate State under the Raja of Sarguja. The chief of Udaipur and his brother were imprisoned on a charge of manslaughter, and as the former had no son, his estate was annexed by Dalhousie in 1852. During the Mutiny the two brothers escaped from prison and re-established their authority. One of them died and the other was captured and transported in 1859. But the State was conferred in 1860 on the ruler of Sarguja as a reward for his loyalty during the Mutiny.[53] Although theoretically Udaipur was still treated as a lapse, in practice the policy of annexation was reversed.

6. *Spoliation of the palaces of Nāgpur and Avadh.*

The annexations of native States, one after another, were bad enough, but they were rendered far worse by the method of executing them, at least in some cases. Two notorious cases, namely those of Nāgpur and Avadh, may be cited as illustrations. In a minute, dated 10th June, 1854, Dalhousie noted that the "property of the Bhonsla was considered by the Honourable Court (of Directors) to be fairly at the disposal of the Government." He, however, did not think it desirable that the property should be 'either alienated from the family, or given up, to be appropriated and squandered by the Ranis.' In order to avoid these dangers he suggested that "jewels and furniture, and other personal property, suitable to their rank, having been allotted to the Ranis, the value of the rest of the jewels etc. should be realized, and that the proceeds should be constituted a fund for the benefit of the Bhonsla family."[54]

Whatever one might think of this laudable desire, it should have been obvious that the procedure suggested could not be followed without serious wrangles and dissensions, and the sale by auction of the property at Nāgpur, before the eyes of the members of the royal family, would be highly impolitic. It would not fetch a reasonable price and highly exacerbate the feelings of those who re-

garded themselves as victims of a high-handed action of injustice. Nor could it be reasonably expected that the British officials, entrusted with the task, would always act with moderation and a strict sense of jusice, as they were unacquainted with the local customs and feelings, and imbued with a haughty feeling of superiority over members of an Indian State which was being ruthlessly spoliated by the orders of the superior Government. The unfortunate and painful incidents that followed need not be related in detail; it will suffice to state that there were unseemly quarrels and disputes between the Ranis and officials, ending in a riot in the palace.[55] The general impression left on all neutral observers may be gathered from the following lines of Kaye.

"The live stock and dead stock of the Bonslah were sent to the hammer. It must have been a great day for speculative cattle dealers at Seetabaldee (suburb of Nagpur) when the royal elephants, horses, and bullocks were sold off at the price of carrion;....the venerable Bankha Baee (widow of the deceased Raja's grandfather), with all the wisdom and moderation of fourscore well-spent years upon her, was so stung by a sense of the indignity offered to her, that she threatened to fire the palace if the furniture were removed But the furniure was removed, and the jewels of the Bonslah family, with a few propitiatory exceptions, were sent to the Calcutta market. And I have heard it said that these seizures, these sales, created a worse impression, not only in Berar, but in the surrounding provinces, than the seizure of the kingdom itself."[56]

Dalhousie was not inspired by purely beneficent and humane considerations as his minutes would lead one to suppose The best interpretation of his act may be given in the following words of Mr. Bell.

"He intended absolutely to appropriate the private property of the family, and with the proceeds to supply, or reduce as much as possible, the annual expense of their maintenance. Considering the huge income of the state seized by the British, the Ranis and other members of the family might have been easily spared the indignity and humiliation to which they were subjected for the sake of the amount which the auction sale of their property fetched, and which after paying other expenses constituted the Bhonsla Fund for the benefit and support of the Bhonsla family."[57]

As in the case of Nāgpur, the annexation of Avadh was accompanied by needless acts of spoliation of a cruel and barbarous character. Various charges were brought which were thus summed up by Kaye:

"It was charged against us that our officers had turned the stately palaces of Lucknow into stalls and kennels, that delicate women, the daughters or the companions of Kings, had been sent adrift, homeless and helpless, that treasure-houses had been violently broken open and despoiled, that the private property of the royal family had been sent to the hammer, and that other vile things had been done very humiliating to the King's people, but far more disgraceful to our own."[68]

E. OTHER ANNEXATIONS AND ESCHEATS

1. *Nana Sahib*

An act of Lord Dalhousie, which has obtained undue prominence, and is usually, though wrongly, regarded as one more application of the doctrine of lapse, is the rejection of the claim of Dhundu Pant, better known as Nana Sahib, the adopted son of ex-Peshwa Baji Rao II, to the annual pension of eight lakhs of rupees enjoyed by the latter. Baji Rao died in January 1851, leaving by a will all his property to Nana Sahib. Nana accordingly took possession of the personal property of his father which he admitted to be of the value of twenty-eight lakhs of Rupees, though it is generally believed to be worth considerably more than that amount. On July 29, 1851, Nana made an application for a continuance of the pension and *Jāgīr*. The Lieutenant-Governor of N.W.P., who first considered this application, rejected the demand for pension, but recommended that the "land contained in Bithur Jaghir should be allowed to continue free of land-tax during the life of Nana, provided he continued to reside there". Lord Dalhousie agreed with this recommendation, but went out of his way in making some observations, which were not very happily worded. Referring to Baji Rao II he said: "He had no charges to maintain, he has left no sons of his own, and has bequeathed property to the amount of twenty-eight lakhs to his family. Those who remain have no claim whatever on the consideration of the Government. Neither have they any claim on its charity, because the income left to them is amply sufficient."[59]

The words "he has left no sons of his own", and the reference to the ample income left by the ex-Peshwa, gave rise to the impression that the decision to discontinue the pension rested upon two grounds, namely, (1) inadmissibility of the claim of an adopted son, and (2) the absence of the need. Naturally, the first revived the whole question of the doctrine of lapse, and the second was challenged on the ground that if the claims of Nana were just, it is immaterial whether the property left by Baji Rao II was ample or

not. Actually both these points were debated at length by Nana Sahib as well as the outside critics of Dalhousie.

Really speaking, Lord Dalhousie rejected the application of Nana Sahib on the ground that the pension granted to ex-Peshwa Baji Rao was personal and not hereditary, and even a legitimate son of Baji Rao II, had there been any, would not have been entitled to it Nana sent a memorial to the Court of Directors. He "relied on the terms of the arrangement, entered into between Malcolm and Baji Rao II, granting a pension to the latter 'for the support of himself and family', and argued that such expression indicates a hereditary grant inasmuch as it is uncalled for in a mere life-grant, which necessarily included the maintenance of the family." The Court of Directors, however, upheld the view of Dalhousie that the pension was not hereditary, and therefore Nana Sahib had no claim to its continuance.[60]

The point was vehemently argued on both sides, but it is not possible to give a decided verdict on one side or another. While pension undoubtedly means, in a general way, a personal grant, the additional words, mentioned above, may be held to qualify it in favour of Nana. There is, however, no doubt that Malcolm, who negotiated the treaty with Baji Rao II, certainly intended a life-pension and not a hereditary one This is clear from his letter of June 19, 1818, in which, in support of the terms he offered to Baji Rao, he said, that "if Baji Rao had continued the contest, a course which the agreement with him sought to prevent, the British would have been forced to make military preparations which would have cost more than the value of the life-pension granted to Baji Rao".[61] It is a well-known rule of equity that where the interpretation of a word or an expression is doubtful, the intention of the man who used it must be taken into consideration. In accordance with this principle, the view of Dalhousie, upheld by the Court of Directors, must prevail in preference to the contention of Nana. The fact that Baji Rao II himself "often pressed upon the Government the propriety of making a future provision for his family"[62] indirectly proves that he, too, regarded the pension as personal and not a hereditary one. On the whole, the legality of the claim of Nana Sahib does not appear to be very strong. In any event, his case was not treated as being affected by the doctrine of lapse, though some words used by Dalhousie might have lent colour to the supposition.

2. *Carnatic*

The case of the Nawab of Carnatic was of a somewhat different kind. As noted above, by a treaty concluded in 1801, Nawab Azim-

ud-daulla was reduced to the position of a titular dignity, enjoying a pension secured on the revenues, but deprived of all powers of actual administration.[63] On October 17, 1855, Muhammad Ghaus, the Nawab of the Carnatic, died without leaving any issue, and his uncle Azim Jah claimed the rank and dignity of the Nawab on the ground that he was the nearest relation to the deceased Nawab. It was, however, decided that the title of Nawab should be abolished. Lord Dalhousie held that the treaty of Wellesley with Nawab Azim-ud-dualla was a personal one, and though several of the latter's descendants were allowed to succeed, that was due to the favour of the British Government and not by the hereditary right of succession. In support of this view it was pointed out that Wellesley deliberately omitted from the first draft of the treaty all references to hereditary succession of the Nawab. Further, whereas in other treaties, made by Wellesley with the ruling chiefs, as in the case of Avadh, express mention is made of the heirs and successors of the other contracting party, here the treaty was negotiated with Azim-ud-daulla alone. It was urged, on the other hand, that the words, 'of his ancestors', occurring in the preamble and first article, indicate hereditary succession. Reliance was placed also on Article 4 which lays down that revenues of the Carnatic, with the exception of the portion appropriated for the maintenance of the said Nawab, "shall be for ever vested in the said English Company". Against this it was argued that 'for ever' qualifies the enjoyment by the Company and cannot be treated as equally applicable, by inference, to the maintenance of the Nawab, who is singled out as 'the said Nawab'. The use of the word 'ancestors', it was pointed out, merely states a fact but does not create any right, particularly as all reference to hereditary right was deliberately expunged from the first draft of the treaty More important are the following words used in the preamble to the treaty with reference to its object. namely, "establishing the connection between the said contracting parties on a permanent basis of security, in all times to come; wherefore, the following treaty is now established......for *settling the succession* to the subadari of the territories of Arcot." These words are certainly very inappropriate if the treaty were intended to be merely a personal one. They certainly indicate that the "framers of the treaty intended it to operate in perpetuity," as was also proved by regular succession of the Nawabs, up to 1855; but it is a debatable point whether these words alone, taken along with the points noted above, give a clear right to the succession of the Nawabs in perpetuity. Lord Dalhousie contended that the two Nawabs who followed Azim-ud-daulla "occupied that position solely by the grace and favour of the British Government and not as of right." But he

had the candour to admit that the uncle of the late Nawab, who claimed to be his successor, was actually referred to as such in certain official papers. He agreed that these references certainly indicated an expectation on the part of the British Government that if Muhammad Ghaus should have no children, his uncle Azim Jah would be allowed to succeed him as Nawab. But, he argued, "to indicate an expectation, or even an intention, is not to recognize or confer a right"[64]

As in the cases of annexations, so, here also, expediency and self-interest played an important part A minute written by Lord Harris, with which the Governor-General fully concurred, lays down five distinct grounds for abrogating the rights and privileges of the Nawab of Carnatic, if it can be done 'without a violation of faith'. Two of these may be noted below —

1 It is not only anomalous, but prejudicial to the community, that a separate authority, not amenable to the law, should be permitted to exist

2 It is impolitic and unwise to allow a pageant to continue, which, though it has been politically harmless, may at any time become a nucleus for sedition and agitation

"In later years Azam Jah repeatedly appealed to the home authorities, but they declined to re-open the decision as to the abolition of the title of Nawab of the Carnatic, although in 1867 a new and inferior title of Prince of Arcot was conferred upon him and his heirs by Her Majesty under letters patent A pension, the dignity of a salute, and certain exemptions from the jurisdiction of the Civil Courts were also granted"

3 *Tānjore*

By a treaty concluded in 1799 with Lord Wellesley, Raja Sarroji of Tānjore transferred the whole of his territory, except the fort, to the British Government He remained the titular sovereign of Tānjore, but his actual sovereignty did not extend beyond the fort where he resided. On 29 October, 1855, died Shivaji, the Raja of Tānjore, who had two daughters but no male issue. Thereupon Mr Forbes, Resident at Tānjore, proposed, with the consent of the family, that the younger daughter should succeed her father as the elder was on her death bed He quoted authorities to prove that females could inherit in default of male issue, and cited an actual case in support of it, namely, that in 1735 a Raja of Tānjore was succeeded by his widow. The Council of Madras, attended by Lord Dalhousie, however, decided that the Tānjore Raj was extinct, and

this decision, leading to the annexation of Tānjore, was later upheld by the Governor-General in Council. They, and later, the Court of Directors, which supported them, took the view that the right of 'succession of a female to Hindu Raj' was never recognised by Hindu Law, the isolated cases, like those of Ahalya Bai, being merely exceptions to the general rule in special circumstances.

The real ground for the annexation of Tānjore is revealed by Lord Dalhousie in a minute. Referring to the report of the Resident that the late Raja 'betrayed a disposition on all occasions' "to do whatever he knew the Resident would not allow, and to use the whole weight of his authority to frustrate whatever management might be proposed for the advantage of the Durbar", Lord Dalhousie observes. "I certainly think the British Government would be deeply to blame if it revived this dead sovereign in the person of a young girl, who, helpless now, would be nothing less than a tool in the mischievous hands of others in future years.[67] The Court of Directors added one more reason, namely, the inadvisability of "perpetuating a titular principality at a great cost to the public revenues".[68]

Now, opinions might differ regarding the right of the daughter to succeed, but if one has to judge on the basis of Hindu laws and precedents, going back to the Hindu period, the succession of a daughter to the throne is not less supported by rules and precedents, nor is more objectionable on general principles, than the British view of the invalidity of adoption made without the previous consent of the sovereign authority.

A more serious issue is involved in the question. The Raja of Tānjore was not a dependent ruler, but an independent sovereign, so far as the last remaining portion of his State, namely, the fort, was concerned. Nor was the State of Tānjore created by the British. So, even according to the principles laid down by Dalhousie as mentioned above, there should not have been any interference with its succession. Even the apologists of the Doctrine of Lapse must admit that the fort of Tānjore, representing the old State of Sātārā, "was not a fief which could lapse or escheat to the British Government." This was the view even of a great lawyer who took upon himself the task of vindicating the administration of Lord Dalhousie.[69] There can be hardly any doubt that the British Government had neither the legal nor the moral right to interfere in the question of succession to the Tānjore Raj. The arbitrary procedure by which Tānjore was annexed was rendered far worse by the seizure of even personal and private property of the family.[70] It is unnecessary to refer at length to the litigation arising out of it, both in India and in England. Suffice it to state, that the Supreme Court at Madras

had decided in Rani's favour, and the Privy Council set aside the decision only on the ground that, as the Governor-General had acted for the Company in his interpretation of a treaty, a law-court could take no cognisance of the Rani's plaints. Lord Kingsdown, however, declared that the Company had no *legal* claim to the property and the titular dignity of Tānjore.[71] Presumably in view of this comment, the British Government made partial amends for their high-handed acts of injustice by returning that portion of the property which they admitted to be private.

The annexation of Tānjore leaves no doubt that the British Government under Dalhousie pursued "the steady policy of seizing every chance of aggrandisement",[72] on any pretext, fair or foul.

4. *Berar*

Reference has been made above to the Treaty with the Nizam of Hyderabad on October 12, 1800, by which the Nizam undertook to maintain a body of troops, officered by the British, at his own expense.[73] By the article 12 of this Treaty the Nizam was also required to supply the British, in case of war, an additional force of 6,000 infantry and 9,000 horse of his own troops This force proved very inefficient during the Marāthā campaigns of 1803, and the British urged upon the Nizam the necessity of improving their training and discipline. They pointed out that as the Subsidiary Force was only meant for fighting outside enemies, a highly efficient body of troops was necessary for quelling internal disturbances. Thus came into existence, with the acquiescence of the Nizam, a new force known as the Russell Brigade, after the name of the Resident, Henry Russell. This subsequently developed into the "Hyderabad Contingent". It was officered by the British and employed, along with the Subsidiary troops, in the military campaigns of 1818 against the Pindāris and the Marāthās. The Resident Russell himself wrote to the Commander-in-Chief "In fact they belong to the Nizam's army in name only, they consider themselves as Company's troops, and for all practical purposes they are as much so as those on our own immediate Establishment".[74]

But though the troops belonged to the British, the cost of maintaining it proved a heavy burden to the Nizam, and he was consequently in arrears in respect of the expenditure of the "Contingent" It was, however, quite patent, that the Nizam was not bound to maintain the Contingent, and Dalhousie himself knew it better than others. Writing to the Resident he observed· "If however the Nizam should turn upon us and deny the obligation existing by Treaty, I am bound as a public man to say that I could not honestly

agree that there was any other warrant than that of practice for upholding the Contingent.....but if he (Nizam) were to take his stand upon the Treaty, I could not argue that either the letter or the spirit of it bound the Nizam to maintain 9,000 troops of a peculiar and costly nature in peace, because it bound him to give 15,000 of his troops on the occurrences of war."[75]

Dalhousie therefore wanted to legalise the whole thing by a supplementary Treaty, and adopted the tactics of a bully to force the consent of the Nizam. On June 6, 1851, Dalhousie wrote to the Nizam demanding, among other things, the payment of the arrears of the Contingent troops, or, in the alternative, the cession of certain districts in his dominions, known as the Berars, to the Government of India for their maintenance This demand was accompanied by the threat that otherwise the Nizam would incur the displeasure of the British Government whose power, he said, "can make you as the dust under foot and leave you neither a name nor a trace".[76] Fearing the dire consequence, the Nizam cleared a major portion of the debt by paying 45 lakhs as the first instalment and promising to pay the balance of 35 lakhs by the end of October, 1851. But by March, 1853, the arrears again amounted to 45 lakhs[76a] and the Resident informed the Nizam on March 12, 1853, that the Government of India could no longer rely on promises, and peremptorily demanded the cession of Berar. For once the Nizam took courage in both hands and said to the Resident Colonel Low: "Colonel Sahib, I want to ask you a question about that Contingent....." (After referring to the war which necessitated the Contingent he continued): "The Company's army and my father's army conquered the ruler of Poona......after that there was no longer any war, so why was the Contingent kept any longer than the war"? The Resident, unaccustomed to such language, exclaimed in righteous indignation that he could not answer questions about events that occurred thirty-six years ago. He then bluntly told the Nizam that his predecessor did not object to the Contingent and so it was there.[77] The Resident then demanded the immediate payment of all the arrears including principal and interest, and refused to accept the guarantee of the principal nobles of the State for the regular payment of the Contingent. The Nizam asked him: "suppose I were to declare that I don't want the "Contingent"?" The Resident replied that in that case the Contingent would be disbanded, but only by gradual stages, and the Nizam must cede territories, temporarily, to ensure the regular payment of troops till such time when the whole force would be disbanded [78] Being pressed for a definite reply, the Nizam said: "If you are determined to take districts you can take them without my either making a new treaty or giving any answer at

all".[79] After the abrupt end of the interview the Resident told a noble of the Nizam's court: "I must now immediately report His Highness's obstinacy and folly to my own Government, and if His Highness does not forthwith depart from His present foolish conduct, he will assuredly hereafter have much cause to regret that folly,—but that this will be no fault of mine."[80] The Resident also told the Diwan that in case the Nizam fails to comply with the demand it might be necessary to employ force.[81]

The rest may be briefly told. A new treaty was concluded with the Nizam on May 21, 1853[82] By Article 3 of this Treaty the Government of India undertook to maintain "for His Highness" an auxiliary force to be styled the "Hyderabad Contingent", consisting of not less than five thousand infantry and two thousand cavalry, commanded by British officers and controlled by the British Government. For providing the regular payment of the troops and cancelling the old debt, the Nizam assigned the fertile districts of Berar, the cotton garden of Hindustān, the Raichur doāb, sixteen villages, and some other territories to the exclusive management of the British[83] This was a concession to the sentiment of the Nizam. Instead of the legal cession of the territories, to which the Nizam was strongly opposed, the Berars were handed over to the management of the British who acknowledged, in theory, the sovereignty of the Nizam over them. But if this encouraged the Nizam to look upon the cession of the Berars as temporary or redeemable in future, he and his descendants were sadly disillusioned. In spite of repeated endeavours on their part, they could not get back the Berars, and ultimately Lord Curzon imposed a new treaty upon the Nizam on November 5, 1902, by which the districts were leased in perpetuity to the British.[84] As a compensation for this, the Nizam secured the privilege of being called "His Exalted Highness" instead of mere "Highness".

Some apologists of Dalhousie have praised him for his moderation in his dealings with the Nizam This is not altogether unfounded, for whereas the Court of Directors and the Board of Control were in favour of stronger measures, and some officials even suggested the annexation of Hyderābād,[85] Dalhousie scouted these ideas and was satisfied only with the Berars. In this connection a letter of Dalhousie is quoted in which he refused to "put the treaty (with the Nizam) into the fire and walk over him", thus illustrating "the old story of the wolf and the lamb over again, a policy which has abundance of advocates both in this country and at home."[86] The apologists forget that an act is to be judged on its own merits, and cannot be regarded as commendable or praiseworthy simply because

it is less criminal than what was advocated by others. It is gratifying to note that there was at least one Englishman who had the courage and honesty to depict the conduct of Dalhousie in its true colours [87] He had ample opportunity of knowing the facts, as his father, General James Stuart Fraser, was the Resident at Hyderābād during the period of most of the transactions noted above. He has argued at great length, and with conspicuous ability, that the British Government had no right to maintain the Contingent for doing the same service which should have been performed by the Subsidiary Force for which the Hyderābād State paid by a large territorial cession. This Subsidiary Force, he points out, was reduced, without the Nizam's consent and in disregard to treaty obligations, for a lengthened period, to a lower strength than that specified, at a great pecuniary saving to the British Government. Such reduction was made possible mainly in consequence of the services rendered by the "Contingent" and the expenditure thereby imposed upon the Hyderābād State. "The Contingent", he said, "therefore did our prepaid work at Nizam's expense" He quotes a despatch of the Government of India, dated 7th October, 1848, which contains the following:

"His Lordship in Council agrees with Colonel Low in thinking that we cause the Contingent to become a much heavier burden on the Nizam's finances than it ought to be The Staff, in the opinion of the Governor-General in Council, is preposterously large. The pay and allowances and charges of various kinds, are far higher than they ought to be" [88]

Lord Dalhousie also had said on other occasions that the "Contingent" was "unfairly large and too expensive", and admitted its extravagant costliness. And yet, the Despatch continues, "His Lordship in Council does not think that we are called upon in justice to reduce a man of the force". It is true that in the same Despatch the Governor-General professed to be "prepared" and very willing "to make every exertion" that "might safely diminish" those charges "as vacancies occurred and as opportunities offered".[89] During the five years that followed, vacancies did occur and opportunities did present themselves, but Dalhousie did nothing. The cost of the "Contingent" in 1849 was thirty-eight lakhs and a half, and continued to be the same till 1853 when the Nizam was forced to cede the Berar Districts for its upkeep. Yet in the very first year after the cession the cost was reduced to seventeen lakhs and a half of Rupees. If, therefore, the cost were reduced in 1849, the savings effected during 1849-53 would have been more than the debt for which the Nizam was forced to cede Berars. If to this be added the

savings effected by the unauthorised reduction of the Subsidiary Force by the British, the Nizam would have been a creditor instead of a debtor.

It is not a little curious that the biographers of Dalhousie, not even Lee-Warner who published his two big volumes in 1904, have dealt with this aspect of the question, although it was forcefully presented in a book, written as far back as 1885. Carefully considering the facts mentioned above, one would feel less enthusiastic over the letter of Dalhousie, quoted above, in which he denounced those who wanted to put the treaty with the Nizam into fire and thus play the wolf to the lamb. Dalhousie did not put the treaty into fire, but certainly kept it in cold storage, and his behaviour to the Nizam differed in degree, but not in kind, from that of the wolf to the lamb in the well-known story of Aesop.

One of the pleas advanced in their support by the Government of India is that the Nizam did not object to the "Contingent". The fact is that the British managed the affair of the "Contingent" with the help of Chundoolal, the chief minister of the Nizam, and this man was upheld by irresistible British power as the head of the Hyderābād administration for more than thirty years for the purpose of compelling the Hyderābād State to maintain out of its revenues the "Contingent" which no treaty recognised or justified.[90] How the British authorities took good care to keep Chundoolal in his post will be apparent from the following instructions of the Governor-General, Marquess of Hastings, to the Resident at Hyderābād in a letter dated October 25, 1822: If the Nizam were to indicate any wish to remove the Minister he should be given to understand "that the removal of Chundoolal would cause a material change in the connection between the two Governments. It would be fitting to throw out, as if loosely, that should a minister in whom the British Government could have no confidence be entrusted with His Highness's concerns, it might be incumbent on the British Government to look to its interests in another mode than what had hitherto sufficed, and to claim for itself, as standing in the Peshwa's position, all those rights over the Hyderābād dominions which that Prince had possessed. The Governor-General in Council holds the good faith of this Government to be staked for the maintenance of Chundoolal in his office, unless he shall be guilty of some distinct delinquency".[91]

That the Nizam felt the galling yoke of Chundoolal, whom he was unable to remove, will be clear from the following account of the interview between the Nizam and the Resident on June 26, 1852:

"The Nizam entered upon, as he generally does at every interview I have with him, a long explanation of the difficulties and disordered condition of the State which he dated from the time of Maharaja Chandoolal."[92] This is a pathetic picture of His Highness the Nizam fuming and fretting against the maladministration of a minister, maintained against his will simply in the interest of the British. It is through pliant tools like Chundoolal that the British kept under check the rulers of Native States, and then found faults with them for not doing what they had no power of doing.

5. *Minor Annexations*

A brief reference may be made to several other annexations of Dalhousie. The State of Sikkim lay to the north of Bengal at the foot of the Himalayas. Friendly relations subsisted between this hilly State and the Government of India, and after the Nepal War, Sikkim received some territories out of the spoils of the war. In 1835 the Raja of Sikkim granted the territory round Darjeeling in perpetual lease to the British in return for an annual payment. The minister of Sikkim thereby lost heavily as it interfered with slavery and his monopolies of trade, and tried in vain to come to an agreement with Dr Campbell, Superintendent of Darjeeling. In 1849 while Dr Campbell and Sir Joseph Hooker, the famous Botanist, were touring in Sikkim, with the permission of the Raja, for some scientific investigations, they were seized by some royal officials and attempt was made to extort from them the privileges demanded by the minister. In spite of strong protests, the two prisoners were not released until a small military force was despatched to the frontier The Raja was called upon to present himself to the British authority together with the guilty persons. Though the first demand was withdrawn and the Raja was asked only to surrender the guilty officials, he did not do so Troops were therefore sent to occupy certain districts of Sikkim, and the annual payment for Darjeeling was withheld[93] While all this was taking place, Lord Dalhousie was absent from the capital, and though he thought that the Council had betrayed a lack of firmness, he approved of their action But on May 4, 1850, the President of the Council recommended the annual payment to the Raja of Rs 12,000 on the ground that he had suffered heavy losses on account of the occupation of his territory and withdrawal of the rent for Darjeeling. Lord Dalhousie strongly disapproved of this proposal and insisted on the course already decided upon. The Council once more urged upon the Governor-General the extension of the mercy and bounty of the Government. As Lord Dalhousie remained firm, the question was referred to the home authorities who administered a strong

rebuke to the Council and fully supported the Governor-General. The Council thereupon raised the constitutional issue, claiming full authority during the absence of the Governor-General. But on this issue, also, the home authorities decided against them. Ultimately an outlying tract of Sikkim, about 1670 sq. miles in area, was added to British India.

Reference will be made later, in Chapter VIII, to the recovery of certain territories from Ali Murad of Khairpur on the charge of forging some documents.[94] While there is no reasonable doubt about the guilt of Ali Murad, the following comments of Arnold deserve serious consideration in forming a just estimate of Dalhousie's responsibility in the matter. "It was doubtful if Mir (Ali Murad) was personally responsible for the forgery, but he was no doubt the person to be held justly responsible But the punishment was too severe. He was reduced from his principality with its annual revenue of about £175,000 per annum to the position of an ordinary *jagirdar* with an estate yielding no more than £35,000 or £40,000 a year. . .

"The fault of Lord Dalhousie's proceedings lay in this that it made our Government judge, accuser, jury and feed barrister in one. Whatever may be thought too of the justice of the sentence, it has been fairly remarked that in trying the Amir Ali Murad—a sovereign prince—by a commission of its own servants, by delivering sentence against him and by making that sentence equivalent to a forfeiture of his rights and privileges as a sovereign, the Government of India declared itself the absolute master of every prince in India, all treaties to the contrary notwithstanding."[95]

Reference has been made above[96] to the unjust annexation of the petty State of Cāchār in Assam Angul, another petty State in Orissa, was annexed, as its ruler was suspected of aiding the Mariah sacrifices (sacrifice of human beings by the Khonds) and had 'the temerity to resist the authority of his seigneurs."[97] The ruler of Sambalpur, Narayan Singh, died in 1849 without leaving an issue. He is said to have desired that his country should pass to the British, and it lapsed "without complaint or claim".[98] Jaipur, another petty State of 165 sq. miles, was annexed when its ruler died in 1849 without any male issue.[99]

It has been claimed by Lord Dalhousie himself, or on his behalf, that he showed wonderful restraint and moderation in not annexing States even when favourable opportunities offered themselves. One such instance was furnished by the death of the Nawab of Bahawalpore, who loyally helped the British during the rebellion of Mulraj in Multan.[100] The inheritance was disputed and an appeal

was made to the British Government, but Dalhousie refrained from all interference. "Nothing would have been easier", wrote he on this occasion, "than to derive advantage, direct and prospective, by meddling with the quarrel for succession." Arnold's remark on this is worth quoting: "Is it really an English statesman who speaks, or the wolf in the fable, that paid the crane for taking the bone out of his throat, by not biting off his head"?[101]

Dalhousie also did not derive advantages from the fighting in Kāshmir between Gulab Singh and his nephew Jawahir Singh, and it is claimed that "the Government of India was loyal both to the spirit and letter of its obligations". Arnold's comment on this is equally interesting. "Was there then no "spirit" that restrained or should have restrained—while the letter permitted confiscation—in other cases as well as that of Jummc? These foils of virtuous self-denial render the instances of aggrandisement rather darker".[102]

It has also been suggested that, in making the annexations, Dalhousie was merely carrying out the orders of the Court of Directors or giving effect to the principles laid down by them. His own attitude is, however, quite clear from his own words. "The king of Oude", he wrote in 1853, "seems disposed to be bumptious. I wish he would be. To swallow him before I go would give me satisfaction".[103]

6. *Bengal*

It would not be irrelevant in the present context to refer to an incident which throws a lurid light on the imperious temperament of Dalhousie and his habitual disregard of treaty rights of the Indian rulers. It was in connection with the Nawab Nazim of Bengal, to whose ancestors the British owed almost everything they possessed in India and whose relation with the British was regulated by a series of treaties. A petty theft having been committed in the camp, two persons were tortured to extort confession and died, probably as a result of the beating, though there was no positive evidence in support of the conjecture. Several servants of the Nawab were tried on a charge of complicity in this murder, but were acquitted by the Sadar Nizamat Adalat, which, however, convicted and condemned the guilty parties. Lord Dalhousie, in 1853, pronounced the Nawab guilty of allowing "a monstrous outrage upon humanity to be perpetrated under his very eyes", evidently on the assumption that the Nawab must have been cognisant of whatever occurred in his hunting camp, even when he was absent. Further, Dalhousie held that the persons *acquitted* by the Sadar Nizamat Adalat, the highest court of justice in India, *were guilty*, and asked the Nawab

to explain "why he continued to show favour and countenance to those who were concerned in the murder" (in the opinion of his Lordship but not in that of the judges). The Nawab replied that "when they were acquitted by the Sudder Court, after being so strictly tried, I really thought them to be not guilty". Dalhousie declared the reply to be "most unsatisfactory", and peremptorily asked the Nawab "to dismiss them altogether from his service" and to "hold no further communication with any of them".

General Colin Mackenzie, who was Agent at Murshidābād in 1858, and who carefully analyzed the case in a report to Government, observed:

"His Highness had an undoubted right to be of the same opinion as the Sudder Nizamat, but this Lord Dalhousie would by no means permit, and being in the only position in the world in which a British sovereign or subject can punish those who have been legally acquitted, he decided that the eunuchs were guilty, and punished His Highness for believing them innocent, not only by depriving him of air and exercise, and of his right to have his travelling expenses paid from the Deposit Fund, but by recommending to the Court of Directors to diminish His Highness's stipend, to take away the salute of nineteen guns . . . . .He even brought in a Bill depriving his Highness, his family and relations, including the ladies, of all immunities and rights which had been secured to them by Treaties, by pledges from successive Governors-General, and by no less than four Acts of Council "

The Nawab's remonstrances were of no avail The Court of Directors sanctioned all the proposals of Dalhousie except the reduction of stipends and the abolition of salute, which was, however, reduced from 19 to 13 As a reward for his loyal services during the Santal rebellion of 1855 and the Mutiny of 1857, Lord Canning restored to the Nawab most of the privileges taken away by Dalhousie.[104]

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1 Dalhousie's Minute, dated August 30, 1848 (Warner, II 116) *THG* (353) gives a slightly different version.
1a *THG* (353)
1b. Arnold, II 5.
2 Warner, II 115
3. *Political History of England*, Vol. XII, p. 40-1.
4. Some complaints were made before, but they were evidently of too trivial a nature even in the estimate of the Government of India In a letter addressed to the King of Ava on November 17, 1851, Dalhousie wrote "From time to time complaints have been preferred to the Government of India . but the Government of India was unwilling to believe them" Cf B-II 49 ff
4a. John Sullivan: *Are We Bound by Our Treaties*, pp 17-18
5 Jackson, 11
6. Warner, II. 148.
7 Ibid, 165, Arnold, II. 118-9 For the cases of Dhar and Indore in 1834, cf *PIHRC*, XXXIV, 134 ff.

8. Arnold, II. 118-9 K. M. Panikkar, *Relation of Indian States with the Government of India* (1927), p. 56.
8a. John Sullivan· *Are We Bound by Our Treaties*, pp. 17-18.
9. Warner, II. 165.
10. Bell-II. 145-6.
11. Warner, I. 134
12. The account that follows is based on H L Gupta's paper in *JIH*, XXXVI, Part III (December 1958) pp. 397 ff. which gives full references.
13 Ibid, 400.
14. Ibid, 401-2.
15 Ibid, 406-7.
16. Ibid, 408.
17 Warner, II. 150.
18. Ibid, 155
19 Colebrooke's *Digest*, III. 242, quoted in Bell-II, 145
20 *SBE*, XIV 75-6.
21. Bell-II, 156; cf. also pp. 140-53. "Sir John Malcolm, who understood 'adoption' and the Indian attitude towards it better than anyone else, twenty years before Dalhousie's time (November 14, 1829) expressed this opinion: 'Adoptions, which are universally recognised as legal among Hindoos are not a strict right (any more than direct heirs) where grants of land are for service ...But while a few have been permitted to adopt, others are denied the privilege, and while we declare their direct heirs are entitled to succeed, we lie in wait (I can call it nothing else) to seize their fine estate on failure of heirs, throwing them and their adherents and the country into a state of doubt and distraction'.." *THG* (354, fn. 1).
22. Warner, II. 152.
23. Jackson, 13, Bell-II, 147.
24 Bell-II, 145
25. Dalhousie's Minute of February, 1856, para. 27 (Bell-II, p 19).
26 *CHI*, V p 582.
26a Bell-II, 212-3 According to Dr. S N Sen the adoption by the queen of her sister's son was invalid, according to local custom, as he belonged to a different family (S N Sen *Eighteen Fifty-seven*, p 267).
26b *Sambalpur DG*, 26-7, *Calcutta Review*, XXII (35), XLII (180).
27 Warner, II 160
28 Ibid, 158, 160
29. Ibid, 162.
30 Ibid, 160-1
31 Warner, II 152.
32. See pp. 62, 64.
33 Arnold, II 110-11
33a Bell-II, 162-172.
34. *THG*, (357).
35 Warner, II 178.
36 Jackson, 17.
37. Arnold, II 155-6
38. Jackson, 16-17 Lee-Warner says that "there was not even the pretence of an adoption" (II. 179)
39 Bell-II, 177, Arnold, II. 157
40. The Ranees stated this in their representation to the Government of India (Arnold, II. 162).
41 Bell-II, 178.
42 Arnold, II. 157, 162
43. Jackson, p. 23 f n.
43a Bell-II, 193-7. Some passages are omitted or slightly altered
43b Ibid, 174 ff.
44 Arnold, II 12. The Italics in the quotation are mine.
44a. Ibid.
45. Jackson, 35-37.
46 Jackson, 31.
47 *THG*, 408 (363-4).
48 Bell-II. 14.
48a Bell-III, 50.

49 Jackson, 21
50 *THG*, 382 (340)
51. Warner, I 171
52 Ibid, 167
53. Ibid, 168.
54 Jackson, 74
55 Ibid, 75
56 Kaye-I, Vol I, pp 83-4
57 Bell-II, p 240
58 Kaye-I, I 404-5.
59 Jackson, 53-7.
60 Ibid, 58-9, Kaye-I, I 105
61 Jackson, 61
62 Ibid, 54
63 Cf Vol VIII For the text of the treaty, cf Aitchison, X 72 ff
64 Jackson, 98-9 For a detailed account of the controversy on the Carnatic, cf. Jackson, 82 ff Arnold (II. 171-81) makes a scathing criticism of Dalhousie's views and action
65. Jackson, 103-4
66 Warner, II 142 The title 'Prince of Arcot' was given by a Letters Patent, dated August 2, 1870 (Aitchison, X 79)
67 Jackson, 110
68 Ibid, 111
69 Ibid, 112
70 This occurred after the departure of Lord Dalhousie.
71 Jackson, 113 Arnold, II 182
72 Arnold, II 182
73 Vol VIII Aitchison IX 62
74 *A History of the Hyderabad Contingent* by R G Burton, (Calcutta, 1905), p 35 This and many other official documents referred to in this section are quoted in *PIHC*, XX 252-9
75. Fraser, 376
76 Briggs, *The Nizam*, I 212
76a The following observations of Major Moore, one of the Court of Directors, throw some light on the accumulation of arrears "Overwhelmed with financial difficulties, the Nizam was at length unable to pay the Contingent, and we kindly lent him the money from our own treasury first at 12 per cent, and latterly at 6 per cent interest, and thus our staunch Ally incurred a debt to us of about fifty lakhs of rupees" (Papers, Nizam's Debt, 1859, quoted by Bell, *The Bengal Reversion* p 54)
77 Hyderabad Residency Records, Vol 91 (Foreign Department), L No 70 of 1853
78 Ibid, L No 74, para 14
79 Ibid, para 20
80 Ibid, L No 79
81 Ibid, L No 81 Fraser, 376
82 Aitchison, IX 85
83 Arnold, (II 144) refers to them as "a few other Jewels picked out of the territory of the old Nizamate" and "some of the best soil in India"
84 Aitchison, IX 165
85 General Fraser, the Resident at Hyderabad, suggested that the Government of India should take over the temporary management of the Nizam's territories till the finances of the State improved (Fraser, 326)
86 Quoted by Lee-Warner (II 126) in support of Dalhousie's policy of moderation.
87 *Memoirs and Correspondence of General James Stuart Fraser* by Col Hastings Fraser (London, 1885), Chapter IX, pp. 351 ff Arnold (II 145) also strongly condemns Dalhousie's action and comments "It is flatly impossible, unless one law of morality prevails in Europe, and another in Asia, to accept Lord Dalhousie's declaration that "the conduct of the Government of India towards the Nizam has been characterised by unvarying good faith, liberality and forbearance "
88 Ibid, 353.
89 Ibid, 354
90 Ibid, 358.

91. Ibid.
92. Ibid, 374.
93. This is the official version (Warner, I. 378-80). In view of many instances where similar accounts of annexations, laying the whole blame at the door of the Indian rulers, have proved to be wholly or partially inaccurate, it may be doubted whether the affairs at Sikkim, reported above, represent the whole truth. This doubt is enhanced by the fact that Lee-Warner does not refer to brutal outrages and tortures inflicted upon Dr. Campbell, described in minute details by Arnold (II. 185). The lenient view taken by the Council about the ruler of Sikkim is hardly compatible with such barbarous conduct on his part. Evidently these wild reports were first spread to prejudice the case against Sikkim, but later found to be baseless (After the above note was in print, the author has come across some documents which show that his doubt about the authenticity of the official account was fully justified. A critical and comprehensive account of the British relations with Sikkim, based on these documents, will be given in Chapter XXXII)
94. For a detailed account, cf Arnold, II 188 ff
95 Arnold, II. 196-8.
96 Chapter V
97. Arnold, II 183
98 Arnold, II 187, Lee Warner, II 167.
99 Lee Warner, II. 163
100 See Chapter X.
101. Arnold, II 201
102 Ibid
103 Baird, *Private Letters of Lord Dalhousie*, p 282.
104. Major Evans Bell, *The Bengal Reversion*, pp iv-vii.

CHAPTER V

BURMA AND ASSAM

I. BURMA (up to 1825)

A. *Events leading to the War*

Reference has been made above to the destruction of the mighty kingdom of Pagan by the Mongols under Kublai Khan in the last quarter of the thirteenth century A.D. This was followed by a period of political disintegration for more than two centuries and a half. The Shans obtained a firm footing in the country but it was divided into a number of small principalities, the chief among them being (1) Upper Burma, with its capital, first at Pinya and then at Ava on the Irawadi, dominated by the Shans; (2) Mon or Talaing kingdom of Pegu in the Delta, (3) The Burmese kingdom of Tungoo, intermediate between the two; and (4) Arakan The history of this period is merely a confused record of struggle between various kingdoms contesting for supremacy At last the Burmese dynasty ruling at Tungoo, under its two kings Tabinshwehti (1531-50) and Bayinnaung (1551-81), united the whole of Burma, excepting Arakan, under its authority, and even subdued a large part of Siam including its capital Ayuthia The Burmese ousted the Shan chiefs from Upper Burma and fixed their capital at Ava But gradually the power of this dynasty declined under a series of weaklings ruling for about a century until A.D. 1740 when the kingdom was overrun by the Talaings. Then arose a Burmese leader, named Alaungpaya (Alompra), who not only conquered the whole country during his short reign of eight years (1752-60), but also defeated the Manipuris and completely subjugated the Talaings. He shifted his capital to Rangoon, but Ava was again made the capital by his son Hsinbyushin (1763-76), who raided Manipur, attacked Siam, and eventually captured Ayuthia. Bodawpaya, another son of the great Alaungpaya, who ruled for a long period from 1782 to 1819, annexed Arakan (1785) He is said to have carried off 20,000 Arakanese into captivity and constantly carried away large numbers to employ them in forced labours or military expeditions He also conquered Manipur and established his political supremacy in Assam. Thus, at the beginning of the period under review the Burmese Empire not only included the two border States of India, namely Arakan and Manipur, but also, for all practical purposes, the State of Assam. Bodaw-

paya built a new city, Amarapura, about six miles north-east of Ava, and transferred his court there in May, 1783.

The powerful Burmese king Bodawpaya and his successor, his grandson Bagyidaw (1819-37), seem to have been blissfully ignorant of the great changes that had taken place in India. Being hitherto accustomed to deal only with petty border States like Arakan, Manipur and Assam, they assumed the haughty and insolent attitude towards the kingdom of Bengal without having any clear perception of the mighty strength of the British who now ruled over this province. The easy conquest of Assam led Maha Bandula, the Burmese general, to believe that he could as easily defeat the English. He communicated this feeling to his king[1] and, according to official Burmese chronicles, "compared the Burmese with lions and the English with jackals".[2] Maha Bandula is also reported to have said that "he maintained a secret correspondence with several native princes of Hindusthan who would rise against the British as soon as the Burmese would set them a good example"[3] The common people also shared the feeling of the court that their high and mighty King could easily crush the British As Crawford put it, "from the king to a beggar (the Burmese) were hot for a war".[4]

On the other hand, the British, having established unquestioned supremacy over India, were naturally eager to extend their power to the border lands. It was an inevitable stage in the progress of imperialistic policy which manifested itself both in the western and eastern frontiers of India after the Third Maratha War. The arrogance of the Burmese Government, fed by ignorance and medieval ideas of royalty, and the logic of British imperialism were the two important factors which seem to have brought about the conflict between the two powers As always happens in such a case, minor incidents assume serious proportions, and *casus belli* is not long in coming

Troubles arose after the Burmese conquest of Arakan which bordered on the District of Chittagong in British India. The Arakanese were oppressed in various ways by the Burmese, and thousands of villagers were forced to leave their agricultural pursuits and work on the construction of a pagoda near the capital. The Arakanese maintained a guerilla resistance for several years and many of them left their country and took refuge in Chittagong. Three Arakanese chiefs, who had led the insurrections against the Burmese, having fled across the border, a Burmese army of 5,000 soldiers led by Nandakyazo crossed over to the British territory in A.D. 1794 and demanded the surrender of the fugitives who were charged with rebellion, robbery and murder. After some negotiations the three

chiefs were delivered to the Burmese general.[5] The British historians have generally blamed the Government for making this weak concession, in spite of the flagrant violation of neutrality by the Burmese. It is possible to take a different view of their action, but in any case there is no doubt that it increased the arrogance and self-esteem of the Burmese king. To check the growing ill-feeling between the two States, a mission was sent to Ava under Colonel Symes in 1795, but no good followed from it, or from the successive missions sent in 1797, 1802, 1803, 1809 and 1811.

Soon a further cause of friction arose. In consequence of the oppression of the Burmese Government in Arakan, mentioned above, a number of Arakanese, estimated to be about 50,000, had taken refuge in Chittagong From this secure base they occasionally raided the Burmese territories for purposes of plunder and revenge. In 1811 they organised a regular invasion of Burmese territory in large numbers under Khynberring, a Mug Chief, but though they overran the whole province, were ultimately defeated and forced to retire to the British territory Two years later the Governor (also called Raja) of Ramri, in Arakan, wrote to the Magistrate of Chittagong formally demanding of the British Government that they should hand over the persons connected with this expedition. The Governor-General, Marquess of Hastings, refused to deliver up the persons who had sought their protection on the ground that this would violate the principles of justice, but he assured the Burmese Government that adequate steps have been taken to prevent the recurrence of any hostile expedition from the territories of the British to those of the Burmese[6] The Burmese Government, however, were not satisfied with this reply. They became inordinately proud and boastful after having established their authority in Assam, and on June 8, 1818 the Governor of Ramri again wrote to the Magistrate of Chittagong demanding from the British Government, on behalf of the Burmese King, the cession of Ramoo, Chittagong, Murshidabad and Dacca on the ground that these were "originally subject to the Government of Arakan" which was now a part of the Burmese dominions.[7] Hostilities were threatened in case the British Government refused this demand. In his reply dated 22nd June 1818, the Governor-General informed the Viceroy of Pegu that he was inclined to treat the demand as an insolent act of the Raja of Ramri without authority from the Burmese King. But, he added, "if I could suppose that letter to have been dictated by the King of Ava, the British Government would be justified in considering war as already declared."[8] No reply was vouchsafed to this letter.

The British had soon other causes of complaint. Some of their subjects, engaged in hunting elephants on the Chittagong frontier,

were seized by the Burmese on the ground that they had trespassed into Burmese territories. Such outrages occurred more than once, the last one happening in April, 1822. It was also alleged that in January, 1823, a British boat, laden with rice, passing through the Koor Nullah, was asked by the Burmese to pay custom dues, and was even fired upon, causing the death of a British subject. To put a check to these outrages and also to provide against the not improbable contingency of a Burmese raid from the other side of the Naaf river which formed the boundary, the British increased their military guard at Tek Naaf and posted some of them in a *char* or island called Shāhpuri just beyond the mouth of the river Naaf.[9] The Governor or Arakan wrote to the Magistrate of Chittagong in January 1823, and later to the Governor-General on August 8, 1823, that this guard should be withdrawn as the island belonged to Burma, and the presence of the British guard may lead to disputes among the people and eventually cause a rupture of the friendship and harmony subsisting between the two States.[9a] The Governor-General in his letter to the Raja of Arakan dated 15th August, 1823, refused to remove the guard and claimed that the island of Shāhpuri had always belonged to the British territory. Nevertheless the Governor-General offered to depute an agent, in the ensuing cold season, to adjust finally all questions relating to boundary disputes in concert with a duly authorised agent from Arakan.[9b] Before this reply could have reached the Raja of Ramri, he sent a force one thousand strong, who landed on the island of Shāhpuri during the night between September 23 and 24, 1823, and killed three of the British sepoys, wounded four, and drove away the rest. The Burmese Chief, who led this expedition, went back to Arakan, but intimated to the British Government that in case they again occupied the island, he would forcibly take possession of Dacca and Murshidabad, which, it was again claimed, originally belonged to Arakan. The British Government wrote to the Court of Ava to disavow the act of the Governor of Arakan in seizing Shāhpuri. In the meantime the British reoccupied it on November 21, 1823, with a large force and put up stockades.[10] It may be added that the island of Shāhpuri was very small in size and there was no satisfactory evidence of its proprietory right belonging to either of the contesting parties.[11]

A more critical situation arose when the Burmese offered to reinstate Govinda Chandra, the ex-ruler of Cāchār and now a fugitive in Bengal, on his throne. It may be recalled that when Govinda Chandra was driven away from his kingdom by three royal brothers of Manipur, he had proposed to the British that his kingdom might be amalgamated with the District of Sylhet, but the British authorities turned down his proposal in 1820. He then turned for help

to the Burmese who were in permanent occupation of Assam, which once exercised suzerainty over Cāchār. The Burmese favourably entertained the request of Govinda Chandra and sent an army to reinstate him.[12]

The establishment of Burmese authority in Cāchār was viewed by Lord Amherst as a serious menace to the security of British territories in Bengal. In a letter written to the Court of Directors, dated January 9, 1824, he stressed the strategical importance of the possession of Cāchār "One of the easiest passes", said he, "from Ava into the Company's possessions is through Manipur and Cāchār, and the occupation of the latter is essential to the defence of that pass ". On the other hand, the occupation of Cāchār by the Burmese would place the District of Sylhet entirely at their mercy. Lord Amherst also fully realised the fact that the permanent occupation of Assam by Burma made it a source of great potential danger The Burmese could bring down the largest army by means of the Brahmaputra and could reach Dacca from the frontier in five days without rousing any suspicion of their intentions[13]

Guided by these considerations, Amherst gave up the old policy of 'neutrality', and forestalled the Burmese Government by recognising Govinda Chandra as the protected ruler of Cāchār[14] and sending a military force from Dacca to Sylhet Govinda Chandra not only recognised the suzerainty of the British and agreed to pay a tribute of Rs. 10,000 per annum but he also gave the British the right to interfere in the internal administration of the country The petty hill-state of Jaintia also followed the example of Cāchār[15]

It was easy to foresee that this action of the British Government would be highly offensive to the Burmese who, as successors of the Ahom kings, claimed the status of a suzerain power in respect to Cāchār and Jaintia, and had already entered into an agreement with Govinda Chandra, the ex-ruler of Cāchār. This was fully realised even by high British officials Scott, the Agent to the Governor-General on the North-East frontier, therefore proposed an arrangement by which Govinda Chandra should remain free from the control of both British and Burmese Governments. But Lord Amherst, imbued with the new imperialist policy, did not agree to it.[16]

The Burmese Government took no notice of the British action, and in December, 1823, a Burmese force, consisting of about four thousand Burmese and Assamese, marched from Assam, entered into Cāchār, and fortified their position at Vikrampur by stockades. Another body entered from Manipur and defeated the troops of Gambhir Singh, the youngest of the three Manipur royal brothers.

It was also reported that a third Burmese force was approaching Jaintia by a different route. Thereupon Major Thomas Newton, the Officer-in-Command of the British force in Sylhet, marched against that section of the Burmese troops which had come from Assam, and defeated them on January 17, 1824, at Vikrampur (45 miles east of Sylhet). The Burmese troops from Assam and Manipur effected a junction at Jātrāpur, eight miles from Badarpur, where all the British troops were concentrated. The British defeated the Burmese at Badarpur on February 13, 1824, and occupied Jātrāpur. But the British troops suffered a reverse near Dudpatti. Other skirmishes followed, and the Burmese troops fell back and withdrew into Manipur.

In the meanwhile negotiation had commenced in regard to the dispute over the island of Shāhpuri. After some parley the agents of the Burmese Government proposed that the island be regarded as neutral ground with a declaration from both the Governments that it should be occupied by neither.[17] This appears to be quite a reasonable proposal. But the British Government insisted on their absolute and unqualified right to the island of Shāhpuri, and intimated that in case the Burmese Government sought to prevent the British authorities from maintaining a force on the island, they would punish those who disturbed their possession.[18] On January 20, 1824, the Burmese seized Mr Chew, the Commander of the British pilot schooner, Sophia, which was stationed off the north-east point of the island together with his men They were threatened with detention until the chief Mug insurgents should be delivered in exchange, but were sent back on February 13. The Burmese also proceeded with armed men to the island of Shāhpuri and planted the Burmese flag there. Then, after burning the solitary hut that stood on the island, they withdrew.[19]

B. *The First Burmese War*

Immediately after the re-occupation of the island of Shāhpuri by the British in November 1823, both sides seem to have begun military preparations for an eventual war The incidents at Shāhpuri and Cāchār, in January 1824, which clearly show that the British Government was virtually at war with Burma, soon led to the open declaration of war between the two countries The British Government issued a formal declaration of war on February 24, 1824, addressed to the Burmese Government, stating, at length, the reasons which forced them to take up arms.[19a] This was followed by a public proclamation dated March 5 [19b] On March 17, the Government of India received the reply from the Viceroy of Pegu to their

communication of November, 1823. After reiterating the old claims and grievances the letter added that Burma was ready for war, that the governors on the Burman frontier had full authority to act, and that until everything was settled no further communication need be made to the court of Ava.[19c] The Governor-General accordingly made arrangements for military operations. An army was sent to the Indian frontier not only to defend the territory against the Burmese, but also to drive them away from the neighbouring territories of Assam, Cāchār and Arakan. But another strong force was sent by way of sea to operate in Lower Burma with Rangoon as its base Although these two operations proceeded simultaneously, it will be convenient for our purpose to describe the two different campaigns separately, one after the other [20]

The force on the frontier of India made Assam its first objective. It started on March 13, 1824, along both banks of the river Brahmaputra, "through thick jungle and lofty grass," and practically met with no opposition till it arrived at Gauhāti on the 28th. Here, for the first time, it was confronted with a mode of defence which proved to be a novel feature of the campaign, both in this area as well as in Burma, viz., the erection of strong stockades,[21] made of solid timber The Burmese were very skilful in constructing them within a short time and defending them with great valour and heroism, but the stockades in Gauhāti were abandoned without any fight. There was, therefore, little difficulty in advancing as far as Koliabar, a little beyond Nowgong, and establishing British authority over a considerable portion of Assam The British force, however, met with a serious reverse at a place called Ramu in the district of Chittagong where a small British detachment was stationed. The Burmese General, Maha Bandula, proceeded from Arakan with a large army, but the British Commander decided not to withdraw On May 17, 1824, Maha Bandula attacked this post. The expected British reinforcement did not arrive and there was some confusion in the British army due to the mutinous movement of a part of the sepoys who deserted in large numbers. The Burmese almost surrounded the British army with the result that the British detachment had to retreat; and the retreat turned out to be a veritable rout Hastily throwing away their arms and accoutrements, the sepoys dispersed in every direction Of the officers, thus deserted, only three escaped, two of whom were severely wounded, but the Captain and the rest were all killed This disaster forced the British to withdraw their troops from Sylhet in order to protect Chittagong, and the Burmese again entered Cāchār; but after the first alarm was over, the force from Sylhet was again ordered to proceed to Cāchār which was then evacuated by the Burmese Although the

British force had to abandon the idea of proceeding to Manipur, Gambhir Singh, who had joined the British camp with his troops, was permitted to conquer it on his own account. He did so and occupied the capital.

In Assam the British force suffered terribly on account of disease, and at the beginning of the rainy season it was compelled to suspend all active operations, and retire to Gauhāti. Resuming the operation at the end of October, the British force proceeded to clear Assam of the Burmese who had re-occupied some of the stations from which they had been previously driven. In January 1825, the British force occupied Jorhāt and advanced towards Rangpur, the capital of Assam After offering some resistance, the Burmese garrison of Rangpur asked for truce, and they were permitted to leave Assam on condition that they did not commit any ravages on the road or forcibly carry away any of the inhabitants. The capitulation of Rangpur practically led to the occupation of the whole of Assam. Though the Burmese made some border incursions and erected stockades in May and June, they were always driven away without much trouble Then a large force proceeded through Cāchār and Manipur and, in a short time, the Burmese completely evacuated these districts. Finally, the British force proceeded to Arakan with the object not only of occupying that province, but also, after this was accomplished, of proceeding further to join the British army marching from Lower Burma towards Ava, the capital of Burma. The British force advanced towards the capital city of Arakan and succeeded in capturing it without much difficulty, as the enemy left their strong positions on the hills after a very feeble resistance. The fall of the capital caused the Burmese to withdraw from all their positions in the province of Arakan. But though the primary object was thus achieved, it was not found practicable for the British force to advance into the interior, across the Arakan hills. To make matters worse, the rainy season set in and brought with it fever and dysentery which took a heavy toll of lives. Accordingly, the British troops were withdrawn from Arakan, leaving only certain detachments on the island of Cheduba and Rami, and on the opposite coast of Sandoway where the climate was more favourable

We may now trace the movements of the British force which was sent to Lower Burma under the command of Sir Archibald Campbell. The force consisted of the contingents from Bengal and Madras, and the place of rendezvous was Port Cornwallis in the Great Andamans. Troops from Bengal and Madras, together with an auxiliary naval force, met early in May and arrived at the mouth of the Rangoon river on May 9. Most unexpectedly they received

no opposition at Rangoon, which was practically deserted when they occupied it on May 11. From Rangoon as its base the British force tried to advance into the interior, but the Burmese offered a strenuous resistance by erecting stockades all along the road. Although a good number of these stockades were captured by the British, sometimes after heavy fights, in some cases they met with serious reverses. The first notable failure met the British force while attempting to capture the stockades at Kemendine on June 3. But though the defeat was avenged a week later by the capture of the stockades, and other successes were gained, the British General had to give up the original idea of proceeding to Ava along the Brahmaputra. For the Burmese forces were not cleared from the Rangoon area and skirmishes took place constantly at the outposts. Sometimes the Burmese evacuated their strong stockades, without any fight, as they did at Thantabun on October 8, 1824 But, about the same time the British force met with a serious though temporary, reverse at Keykole Apart from such determined Burmese resistance with the help of stockades, the British expeditionary force suffered very severely both from want of supply as well as disease The tropical sun, the torrential rains and the thick jungle and swamps, through which the soldiers had to march, caused a pestilence of fever and dysentery, and these took a much heavier toll of lives here than even in Assam. As regards supply, it was expected that as soon as the British captured Rangoon the Talaings would rise in their favour and supply would be readily available from them In this fond hope the British were sorely disappointed. Further, it now became clear to the British that they had very little information about the lay of the land and the means of communication, and it was found difficult to gather this knowledge on the spot and at a short notice All these reasons hampered the progress of the British force and made the spirit of the troops very despondent

Before leaving Port Cornwallis, Campbell had sent an expedition to Cheduba, a small island on the Arakan coast, and it was occupied on May 14. After the advance to Ava was suspended an expedition was sent to the coast of Tenasserim, which occupied the forts of Tavoy and Mergui in September, 1824. Another detachment captured Martaban in October, while Tenasserim and the small province of Yeah submitted in November without any fight.

The Burmese General, Maha Bandula, who had distinguished himself by his victory at Ramu, was recalled from Arakan and placed in command of the main army in Burma, which was opposing the progress of Sir Archibald Campbell. Maha Bandula organised a big army and attacked the British post at Kemendine on Decem-

ber 1. After a number of skirmishes during the next three days there was a general engagement on December 5, but Bandula was defeated and fled in great confusion The fight was renewed on December 7. The Burmese made a brave but unsuccessful stand and were totally put to rout and fled into the jungles. On December 9, the Burmese troops from Dallah were repulsed. But after a few days they re-assembled and, being strengthened by considerable reinforcements, returned to Kokeen and rendered it formidable by numerous entrenchments and stockades One of their first acts after their return was to set fire to the town of Rangoon with the help of some Burmese, who were really emissaries of the Burmese General, but managed to enter the town as old residents who had deserted it on the approach of the British Fire broke out in several places in the town on December 14, 1824, and destroyed nearly one-fourth (according to some, half) the city. The Burmese failed to take any advantage of the confusion which consequently followed in the British army On the other hand, the British General attacked the Burmese army on December 15 The Burman force was estimated to be about 20 thousand strong whereas the British force numbered only thirteen hundred In spite of this disparity of numbers, the Burmese fled from their strongly fortified stockade which was pronounced by the British General as "the most formidable entrenched and stockaded works" which he had ever seen It should be noted, however, that Maha Bandula was not present with the army.

Two important results followed from the British success The Talaings, who regarded themselves as unjustly deprived of Pegu or Lower Burma, which was their homeland, by the Burmans, were encouraged by a proclamation issued by Campbell and rendered effective assistance to the British force Many Talaing soldiers deserted the Burmese army Secondly, the Burmese gave up the offensive and made a general retreat after this signal defeat Campbell, therefore, could advance upon Prome the second city of the Burman empire. He commenced his march on February 13, 1825, but his progress was checked on March 11 by the intelligence of the reverses which the British naval column met with three days before at Donobew where Maha Bandula was waiting with his whole force. The Burmese had put up two stockades there; the first was easily carried by the British naval column, but when they attacked the second, they were forced to fall back and re-embark. On receiving the news of this failure, Campbell returned with his troops for the reduction of Donobew. He was joined by the naval column and, on April 1, 1825, attacked the enemy's position The Burmese General Maha Bandula was killed by a rocket and that was the signal for the general retreat of the Burmese. Immediately after the cap-

ture of the stronghold at Donobew, on April 2, Campbell resumed his march towards Prome. On April 19, he was met by a Burmese messenger with terms of peace, but nothing came out of it. Curiously enough, this Burmese, an old man, after he had been treated to a drink, whispered in the British General's ear: "they are frightened out of their senses, and you may do what you please with them". On April 24, Campbell arrived within sight of Prome, and as the Burmese evacuated it during the following night, he took possession of it without any fight on the 26th. He found there more than hundred pieces of artillery and extensive supplies of grain, which were most welcome to the British force. The fort of Prome had been rendered so formidable by nature and art that in the opinion of Campbell "ten thousand steady soldiers might have defended it against ten times that force". Why the Burmese did not defend Prome which must have presented an almost impassable barrier to the progress of the British army, cannot be easily explained.

As the rains now set in, Campbell spent several months at Prome. Here, again, as at Rangoon, the British force suffered a great deal from sickness, though not to the same extent as in Rangoon.

After the cessation of rains, news was received of the approach of a large Burmese force; but at the same time a reply was received from the Burmese Government to the overtures for negotiation which the British General had made some time before. The deputation which brought the letter proposed that two British officers should pay a visit to the Burmese General. This was done, and on September 17, an armistice was concluded till the 18th of October. But although this date was later extended to the 2nd of November, the Burmese Government refused to accept the terms offered by the British General, namely, the cession of Assam, abstention from interference with Cāchār and Manipur, and the payment of an indemnity of two crores of Rupees

When the hostilities were resumed, the British suffered a serious reverse at a place called Wattygaon, about twenty miles from Prome. The Burmese army, encouraged by this discomfiture of the British, continued to advance towards the British lines, throwing up entrenchments and stockades as it proceeded. A general engagement took place on December 1 and the following days at Simbike, when the British force attacked the enemy line, the operations on land being aided by the British flotilla. The Burmese, being defeated, fled in panic and confusion, and a large number of them were killed The British army and flotilla now continued to advance and reached Meaday with hardly any opposition, as the enemy retreated before them without any fight, abandoning de-

fences which could not have been captured by the British without severe loss. But though the British army was triumphant in the field, they suffered very much from heavy rains, which rendered the country almost impassable. "Sickness, in the awful form of spasmodic cholera, made its appearance and on one occasion the European troops were compelled to halt from the total failure of the supply of animal food".[22] Fortunately for the British, the Burmese made proposal for peace towards the end of December, 1825, which the British, under the circumstances then prevailing, welcomed most heartily. After prolonged discussions, the two parties agreed upon a treaty, more or less on the terms formerly proposed by the British, except that the provinces of Ye, Tavoy and Mergui were added to the territorial cession, while the indemnity was reduced from two crores to one The treaty was signed by the English and the Burmese respectively on January 2 and 3, and an armistice was concluded till January 18, 1826, to allow time for securing the ratification of the Burmese king But as the Burmese king refused to ratify the treaty, hostilities were resumed. A general engagement was fought and the British forces captured the city of Pagham-Mew on February 9, 1826. The military operations were conducted jointly by British naval and land forces. The Burmese army "received the charge with tolerable firmness but were soon obliged to give way".[23] The Burmese fled leaving to the British the city with all the stores of ordnance, arms and ammunition which it contained

Before proceeding further, a brief reference may be made to military operations in Pegu, where a British force was stationed. A small detachment was sent against Sittang, a place on the bank of the river of the same name The attempt failed and the commanding officer was killed A larger force was then sent against the place, which succeeded in capturing it after a severe contest attended by heavy loss on both sides.

In the meanwhile, Sir Archibald Campbell was in full march towards Ava, the Burmese capital. When he had proceeded as far as Yandabo, within four days' march of the capital (about sixty miles), the Burmese agents brought a copy of the ratified treaty as well as a sum of twenty-five lakhs of Rupees as the first instalment of the amount stipulated to be paid according to its terms. The treaty was signed at Yandabo on February 24, 1826. In addition to general professions of peace and friendship between the contracting parties, the treaty of Yandabo provided for the abrogation of all claims on the part of the Burmese king to Assam, Cāchār, and Jaintia. As regards Manipur, it was agreed that should Gambhir Singh desire to return to that country, he should be recognised as

its ruler by the Burmese King. The British Government were to retain the whole of Arakan (i e., provinces of Arakan, Ramri, Cheduba and Sandoway), the Arakan hills known as Yeoumatoung or Pokhingtoung forming the boundary between the Burmese and British territories. The Burmese Government also ceded the provinces of Yeh, Tavoy, Mergui and Tennasserim, with the lands and dependencies appertaining thereto, having the Salween river for the line of demarcation of the frontier. The indemnity was fixed at one crore of Rupees, to be paid in instalments. It was also agreed that an accredited minister from each State would reside at the court of the other, with a suitable escort, and that a commercial treaty should be concluded on principles of reciprocal advantage.

The provisions of the treaty were no doubt very beneficial to the British, and it gave them a firm footing in Burma proper, which ultimately led to the conquest of the whole of that country. In spite, however, of the successful termination of the war, the grounds on which it was started and the manner in which it was conducted by the Government of India were justly censured by contemporary opinion, and although the modern British historians usually ignore this criticism, a few words may be said on both these points.

It would be clear from what has been stated above at the beginning, no impartial historian would perhaps agree with the Government of India, that there was a just cause for their declaration of war. In supporting it the British historians generally emphasise the insolent demands of the Burmese Government for the surrender of Dacca, Murshidabad etc., and the encroachment of the Burmese on British territory in pursuit of the Arakanese fugitives It is to be noted, however, that the former was as much due to ignorance of etiquette and diplomatic usage as to insolence, and in any case, was a mere bravado which deserved ridicule rather than any serious notice; while the latter was practically condoned by the British as their subsequent conduct amply proves. Undue emphasis on these and minor border incidents merely serve to cloud the real issues which brought about the war. The most important of these was the capture of Shāhpuri island, first by the British, and then by the Burmese As has been already stated, none of the parties could show any clear title of right to this small piece of land and, therefore, the attitude of the British in the face of the Burmese proposal to regard it as neutral can only be regarded as prompted by the desire to provoke war. The same thing may be said about the declaration by the British of Cāchār being their protectorate. Here the weakness of the British cause is clear from the refusal of the British to interfere in Cāchār on a previous occasion when they could do so on

much more plausible grounds. Besides, nobody could deny that the Burmese had a just cause of grievance in the fact that British territories were admittedly used as a base of operations by the rebels from Arakan against Burma. It would be interesting to speculate what the British Government would have done if the case were just the reverse. In view of all this consideration it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that the British action in declaring war against Burma was dictated more by the imperialistic design to obtain a firm footing in that country than the redress of any real or imaginary grievances against the Burmese. As a matter of fact, the Government of India themselves admitted this in a letter written to the Court of Directors on December 23, 1825.[24] Their elaborate arguments in justification of the war more or less amount to this that a war with Burma was inevitable sooner or later, and it was better to forestall it at a time when their power and resources were most favourable for achieving success They clearly admitted that the instances which led to the war were, really speaking, "trifling acts of insult and aggression", but they took advantage of them in order to 'avert the evil that inevitably threatened them sooner or later'.[25]

There can be hardly any doubt that the real cause of the war, as mentioned above, was the British alarm at the rapid expansion of Burmese power in Eastern India, and a desire to curb the strength of such a dangerous neighbour The imperial character of the whole undertaking is clearly manifested by the plan of the military operations. If the object of the Government of India were merely to check the aggressions of Burma, they might have easily done it by massing their forces on the frontier of their own territories, and, if necessary, by invading the border states of Assam, Cāchār, Manipur and Arakan. But it is not easy to explain why, in that case, the main offensive was directed against Lower Burma The Government of India advanced the argument that this was only to divert the Burmese forces from their operations on Indian border, which seriously threatened its security, and in justification they pointed out that Maha Bandula and a considerable part of his force were withdrawn from Arakan to Burma proper to check the advance of the main force under Sir Archibald Campbell They even seem to pretend that otherwise they could not have saved India from the Burmese army on the border of India This, however, is an argument that does not merit even serious consideration For no one outside the circle of the Government of India[26] would probably maintain the view that with all the military resources at the command of the British in 1824, the Burmese army, with its outmoded system of warfare, and fighting far away from the centre of their kingdom, with almost impassable hills and jungles inter-

vening between the two, could ever be regarded as a menace to the security of the British territories. As a matter of fact, excepting the single instance of the disaster at Ramu, which was mainly due to want of discretion on the part of the general, and cannot be regarded by any means as a fair test between the two, the British army in Assam and Arakan never met with any serious opposition and conquered the whole territory without any difficulty. It is difficult to admit that the things would have been very different even if Maha Bandula were not withdrawn from Arakan. The British themselves intended that after conquering Arakan, their forces should cross the Arakan hills and join the army of Campbell in Burma, but they had to give up the idea on account of the very bad terrain. Though the difficulties in this respect on the side of Burma were undoubtedly much less, still from the military point of view, the difficulty of the route was a very important factor which could not but considerably impair the striking power of Burma. On the whole it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that the despatch of an expedition against Lower Burma was not in any way dictated by military necessity, nor can it be viewed as a part of the military strategy, unless the conquest of a part of Burma proper was the main object.

As regards the difficulty which almost overwhelmed the British army the following figures may be quoted.

"The original contingents of European troops were 3738 at Rangoon, 1004 in Arakan; at Rangoon their hospital deaths (scurvy and dysentery) were 3160, their battle deaths 166; in Arakan their hospital deaths (malaria) were 595, battle deaths nil—4 per cent. battle deaths, 96 per cent. hospital; 40,000 men passed through the cadres, 15,000 died, and the war cost £5,000,000."[27]

The Government of India argued in their defence that the land was quite unknown and they had no time to secure reliable information either about the ground or about the possibilities of getting adequate supply. As a matter of fact, they were hopeful that the people of Lower Burma would rise against the Burmese Government and join the British and provide them with adequate supply. In all this they were sadly disappointed. While it may be admitted that the ignorance was the main reason for the disaster that befell the British army and almost overwhelmed it, it is not easy to understand why the military expedition should have been sent before reliable knowledge of the land and its people was secured, and provision made for all contingencies. It was not a sudden emergency, for nascent hostilities with Burma had been continuing for years past, and if the Government of India ever thought that war was

inevitable and that fighting in Burma proper would form a necessary part of the campaign, they should have employed the preceding ten years or more for securing information about the country and the people, so that they might provide adequately for the necessaries of the army, when the time came for despatching it. It is therefore obvious that either the idea of sending an army to Burma proper was a comparatively recent one, due to the new imperialistic policy which began to manifest itself after the Third Maratha War, or the Government failed to take the most elementary precaution, a failure which was justly deserving of censure.

II. BURMA (1826-1857)

A. *The Prelude*

The treaty of Yandabo (A.D. 1826) provided for the residence of British and Burman envoy at the Court of each other. This was positively distasteful to the Burmans. The general aversion of the Eastern nations to such a procedure and the causes of the same are very beautifully reflected in a letter from the Emperor of China to the King of Burma. In A D. 1836, the 'Big Brother' wrote to the 'Younger One': "it is not proper to allow the English....to remain in the city. They are accustomed to act like the pipal tree".[1] Those who know how a small seed of this tree, carried by a bird on the roof of a temple, gradually grows up, slowly and unperceived, into a big plant whose roots deeply sink into the masonry and finally breaks down the whole structure, would at once realise the aptness of the simile and the native shrewdness of Chinese intellect. The pithy sentence sums up, with remarkable brevity, the whole history of European colonialism in Asia.

The Burmese had a similar instinct. So the first British Resident at Ava, John Crawford, left after ten weeks. The next one, Henry Burney, lived there for eight years, but was forced to present himself before the king without shoes on. He had to discuss many questions arising out of the treaty of Yandabo, and felt convinced that the Burmese had not reconciled themselves to the cession of territories made by that treaty and would seize the next favourable opportunity of recovering them by another war.

In A.D. 1837, King Bagyidaw lost his throne in a palace revolution and was succeeded by his brother Tharrawaddy. He was of a disreputable character and a habitual drunkard. He was fickle and often fell victim to an ungovernable passion. According to Burney's report he was definitely hostile to the British, and was very anxious to get rid of the treaties with the British which, he

declared, were not binding upon him. He was even believed to have been actively engaged in making military preparations for another trial of strength with the British.

Tharrawaddy shifted his capital from Ava, first to Kyaukmyaung on the river near Swebo, and then to Amarapura. When Benson succeeded Burney as Resident there, in October, 1838, he met with all sorts of difficulties, and felt humiliated in so many ways that he left Amarapura in March, 1839, handing over charge to McLeod. The latter fared no better. He left Amarapura and arrived at Rangoon on July 31, 1839, but the treatment meted out to him by the Governor of Rangoon was so disrespectful that he left Burma with all his followers on January 7, 1840

But although most alarming reports about the hostile preparations of Tharrawaddy continued to pour in from the British Commissioner of Tenasserim, the merchants of Rangoon, and various other quarters, nothing actually happened, and this throws a genuine suspicion on the correctness of the British appraisal of the political situation in Burma from the very beginning of the post-war period. The same thing may be said of panicky rumours of assistance offered by Siam and China to help the Burmans against the English and even of French intrigues with the court of Ava to the same end.

It is against this background of panic, suspicion and mistrust which the British residents in Burma entertained without any reasonable grounds, that we have to judge their views and actions and make a proper assessment of the reasons that led to the Second Burmese War The war itself was, however, the direct outcome of two fundamental traits which distinguished European colonialism in those days The first is a belief in the immense superiority of everything western in culture and government, and a hardly disguised contempt for the manners, customs, laws and administrative system of the East The second is a deep-rooted feeling that the Westerners have an inherent right to force themselves upon the Eastern people for serving their own interests, and if the reaction of the latter is unfavourable, they must go to the wall. The eternal tangle may be described somewhat as follows. The Western peoples settle in an Eastern country for trade or missionary activity; the behaviour of the local people or local Government is not to their liking; they would not, for that reason, leave the country to itself, but must mend it or end it at the point of the sword. It was the logic of the strong towards the weak which was sometimes enforced by pious platitudes of the self-imposed noble mission of rescuing the people from the tyranny of their government and imposing the blessings of their own rule. Without denying for a moment that

the system of administration in many oriental countries in the nineteenth century was exceedingly bad, and the western standard was, generally speaking, much higher, the justice of the plea for interference and the assumptions on which it was based may be properly questioned, and its honesty is not always above suspicion. For, considering human nature as it is, the highest humanitarian considerations on which an action is based may really be a cloak for self-interest and self-aggrandisement. Besides, in the above calculation, no account is made of the inherent evils of foreign domination which may, and often did, exceed the good that flowed from a higher standard of Government

A concrete illustration of what has been said above is furnished by the actual events that followed in quick succession and led to the Second Burmese War.

King Tharrawaddy grew more and more insane and was put under restraint in A.D. 1845. He was succeeded by his eldest son Pagan Min, who did not assume royal title till Tharrawaddy died in 1846. In accordance with the Treaty of Yandabo, the British merchants were carrying on trade and business in Burma. For nearly a quarter of a century none of them had any complaint to make. But soon after 1850 stories of grievances poured in. It is neither possible, nor necessary, to go into these in details, but a brief summary of the important cases[2] may be given.

1. H Potter was promised by the Governor of Rangoon every facility for building a ship. But after some time, a new Governor came and extorted money from him "by all manner of petty annoyances, and under various false pretences." Finally he was compelled to pay Rs. 16,000 for permission to launch his ship. He claimed to have suffered a loss of more than Rs. 24,000.

2. Robert Sheppard, master and owner of the barque "Monarch", engaged the services of a pilot near the harbour of Rangoon. According to Sheppard this pilot, unable to extricate the ship from the shoal water, "through fear or shame jumped overboard", but the charge was brought against him that he had thrown the pilot overboard. The Burman police held an enquiry and sent a report to the Governor. Sheppard and several members of the crew were kept in confinement. Sheppard was, however, released at 8 P.M. on furnishing security, and ultimately the case was dismissed on payment of a sum of money, the total expenses of Sheppard being estimated about one thousand rupees.

3. Harold Lewis, master of the barque "Champion", was charged with murdering a crew who had died on board the vessel,

and was subjected to insults and indignities and the payment of a fine of Rs. 280/-.

4. The European residents of Rangoon stated in a memorial to the Governor-General in Council that they had "for a long time, suffered from the tyranny and gross injustice of the Burmese authorities", and that the Burman Government exacted heavier harbour dues etc., than the amount sanctioned by the Treaty of Yandabo. The memorial also narrated two or three cases of petty harassment by the Burmese officials.

These are the only charges which need be seriously considered, and they present several interesting features. In the first place, all these cases occurred in 1851, twenty-five years after the Treaty of Yandabo. The European residents, "who had suffered for a long time", said that they did not seek redress from the Burmese court "as from long experience foreigners have found that application for redress has resulted only in heavy court expenses". Why the foreigners still continued to carry on their business in Burma and did not leave that 'cursed' country to its fate is not stated. Nor is it easy to explain their long forbearance in bringing the misdeeds of the Burmese Government to the notice of the Governor-General in India. It is a very strange coincidence indeed that all the serious complaints were brought forward in the year 1851, at a time when the well-known aggressive imperialism of the Government of India might hold out some hope of extending its operations to Burma.

Again, another strange feature is that neither the local officials who forwarded the complaints to the Government of India nor the latter ever instituted a proper inquiry on the subject.[3] In forwarding Sheppard's statement of his own case, Col. Gogle had the candour to observe: "On the merits of the case I know nothing more than is stated in Mr. Sheppard's protests, but I am disposed to credit what he states, because he bears such a high character at this place".[4] Dalhousie also expressed similar views.[5] This was another permanent characteristic of British attitude in the East. As the British constitution lays down that the King can do no wrong, so the British colonialism adopts as an article of faith that no Britisher is capable of making a false statement in an oriental country. So the *ex parte* evidence of the British businessmen was considered quite sufficient. But those who remember what has been stated above regarding the mental attitude of these men towards the Burmese may be excused for not readily subscribing to this view. This does not, of course, mean that the complaints were necessarily false or exaggerated. They may be wholly or partially true for all we know, but the fact

remains that a historian has no means of ascertaining the truth or otherwise of these allegations, and the Government of India, who had the means, never cared to do so, at least in a manner which befitted its dignity and would be calculated to carry conviction to all reasonable minds.

When the Commissioner of Tenasserim brought the case of Potter (No. 1 above) to the notice of the Government of India, in February 1851, the latter declined to interfere into the matter. But the cases of Sheppard and Lewis produced a different reaction on them. The Governor-General, Lord Dalhousie, held that as "British subjects and traders have, undoubtedly, a just right to expect that they shall be protected by their own Government from injustice, oppression, and extortion," the Government of India should "demand reparation from the Government of Ava". But as there was no accredited agent of the Government of India at the court of Ava, Dalhousie decided to send Commodore Lambert of the Royal Navy, who was then present in Calcutta, "to proceed to Rangoon with the ships under his command and any other available vessels of war (three at Moulmein are specifically named) in order to endeavour to obtain from the Governor of Rangoon the reparation which is due to the British Government". If in spite of "the presence of British men-of-war in front of Rangoon" and "the obvious justice of the demand", the Governor of Rangoon, contrary to all reasonable expectations or anticipations, "refused to comply with this demand", an opportunity should be given to the King of Burma of making the reparation. If they fail to get redress at this quarter, the Government of India would "doubtless" be "entitled" "to exact reparation by force of arms." The demand was at first confined to the claims of Sheppard and Lewis amounting to Rs. 9,948.

It is not for nothing that Lord Dalhousie has been regarded as one of the greatest Governors-General. After writing the above note he added, evidently as an after-thought, the following comment: "Although there seems no reason to doubt the accuracy of the deposition, or the veracity of the deponents, it would be right that Commodore Lambert should, in the first instance, be satisfied on the head".[5a] To recommend an inquiry after the Head of the Government had expressed his views, pronounced the sentence, and laid down in detail the manner of executing it, can only be interpreted as an attempt to bamboozle the public, or a clumsy effort to satisfy a guilty conscience. The same thing may be said of his further instructions to Lambert "not to commence hostilities, save on specific instructions from the Government of India".[6]

An inquiry into the allegations could be nothing short of a mockery in the face of the pronounced views of the Governor-General on the subject. But in any case it could be easily anticipated that a Commodore of the Royal Navy was as little capable of conducting properly a delicate inquiry on civil claims, as he was of restraining himself from precipitating hostilities against a contemptible enemy who had not the least means of injuring the British vessels, and was thus completely at his mercy.

So, on November 18, 1851, Commodore Lambert started on his diplomatic mission with his own ships accompanied by the Company's steamers, "*Tenasserim*" and "*Proserpine*", properly armed and equipped, and manned by European crews. When the flotilla neared Rangoon the bewildered Governor of the place sent an English resident at Rangoon to learn the purpose of this visit. The Commodore, without divulging anything, fixed up a meeting with the Governor. In the meantime he received in writing, on November 28, complaints of the British subjects against the Governor concerning 38 cases of oppression and injustice. These were mostly new charges, not complained of before, and, as will be shown later, even Halliday, the Secretary to the Government of India, had to admit the impropriety of taking them into consideration. But such trifles counted for little in the judgment of Lambert who decided on the basis of these charges that "the Governor of Rangoon was unfit to be entrusted with the lives and property of British subjects". So, contrary to his instructions, he decided to withhold the demand of the Government of India from the Governor "in view of the many fresh instances of his misconduct", and made his removal from the post a preliminary to entering into any discussion with the Government of Burma. So, on November 27, he sent a letter to the Governor to the above effect, together with two other letters, one written by him to the Prime Minister, and the other from the Government of India to the King of Burma. The Commodore wrote to the Governor, holding him "responsible for an answer" to these two letters within five weeks. The very next day the Governor sent a reply denying that he ever did any injury to British subjects.

As soon as these facts were reported to the Government of India, Mr. Halliday, the Secretary, after ascertaining the views of the Governor-General who was away from Calcutta, wrote a long letter to Lambert on December 27. He observed: "The statements contained in the memorial presented by the British subjects at Rangoon must be received with caution; not having been made the subject of complaint at the time, these additional cases cannot now be made the groundwork of an increased demand for compensation".[7] But never-

theless Lambert's action was fully approved, because these new cases indicated a "systematic course of oppression" by the Governor of Rangoon. Detailed instructions were given to Lambert as to the steps to be taken in all possible contingencies that might arise. Even in case of an unfavourable reply from the king the utmost he was authorised to do was to establish blockade of the two rivers at Rangoon and Moulmein, but he was specifically instructed not to bombard Rangoon or occupy that city or Martaban with an armed force, as any of these courses would "precipitate us prematurely into a war which moderate counsels may still enable us with honour to avert."

The replies to the letters addressed to the Court of Ava were very conciliatory in tone. The king took exception to the threat that "the British Government shall enforce the right it possesses," and expressed the hope that the disputes or differences between the two great countries should be adjusted through the normal procedure. The reply of the minister was even more friendly, and almost humble in tone. It stated that the Governor of Rangoon had been recalled and "proper and strict inquiries shall be instituted" into the complaints of the British merchants.

On January 4, the new Governor arrived at Rangoon. One or two instances may be cited to indicate the attitude of the British even after this practical demonstration of the conciliatory attitude of the Government of Burma. They took exception to the fact that no formal intimation was officially given of the arrival of the new Governor. An English merchant was ordered by the Governor to take down a flagstaff he had erected, and to remove a gun he had placed for his defence. But he refused to do either without the orders of Lambert, to whose credit it must be said that he advised compliance with the order. In the light of these facts it is easy to explain, if not to excuse, the order of the new Governor that the British subjects on shore should not communicate with any vessels on the river.

On January 6, 1852, Edwards, the Assistant Interpreter, went to the Governor's house to intimate to him that a deputation from Commodore Lambert was coming to him. As he reached the foot of the steps, a member of the Governor's suite drew his dagger, but as soon as Edwards met the Governor and complained about it, the culprit was punished, in the presence of Edwards, "by having him taken by the hair of the head, swung round three times, his face dashed to the ground, himself dragged out by the hair, and pitched down stairs".[8]

It is important to bear in mind this trifling incident in view of the complaint of deliberate insult, made by Commander Fishbourne

who, accompanied by Capt. Latter, Edwards and some naval officers, went to see the Governor in order to hand over to him a letter from Commodore Lambert, demanding the sum of Rs. 9,948 as compensation for Sheppard and Lewis, and proposing that a British Resident should be stationed at Rangoon.

The incident, as reported by the deputation, may be summed up as follows.

The members of the deputation arrived near the Governor's house at noon, and taking no heed of the request of two Burmese officers to communicate first with the under-Governor, went as far as the door of the Governor's house. There they were told that the Governor was asleep. On being requested to awaken the Governor, his English interpreter went in, and coming out after a short time, told Edwards that the Governor wished to see him. This was objected to on the ground that the others would be compelled to wait in the sun. The Burmese pointed to an open shed where the English officers could wait in its shade, but they refused, as it was "a shelter thrown up for the reception of persons waiting to have their cases tried." Making one further vain attempt to induce two Burmese officers to inform the Governor about their arrival, the deputation returned to the ships.[8a] Why Edwards did not utilise his permission to visit the Governor and lay the complaints of the British deputation before him, it is not easy to explain, except on the supposition that they were determined to provoke a quarrel, or were in a drunken state, as alleged by the Governor. Immediately on receipt of this news Commodore Lambert suspended all further communications with the Governor, gave asylum in his ships to the British subjects in Rangoon, and blockaded the rivers of Rangoon, the Bassein, and Salween above Moulmein. So far, he technically followed his instructions, though the justice or necessity of such an extreme step may well be doubted.

Next day (January 7) the Governor of Burma sent three of his officers to the Commodore to say that he was really asleep and wrote a letter complaining that the English officers had gone to his house in a state of intoxication and, contrary to custom, entered the compound on horse-back. He also sent the Governor of Dalla ((opposite Rangoon) to negotiate with Lambert who agreed to open communication with the Governor if he would himself come on board his frigate and express his regret. But without waiting for further parley, Lambert, "in disobedience of his orders", took a measure, by way of reprisal, which deeply wounded the susceptibilities of the Burmese. There was in the harbour a vessel, known as the Yellow Ship, which belonged personally to the King of Burma.

The Rangoon Government had warned the English fleet that if the Yellow Ship was touched, its batteries would open, as also if any English ship passed the Burmese ships without leave. In spite of this the Yellow Ship was seized on the 8th morning and taken in tow by the British vessel "Hermes" under orders of Lambert. The Governor of Dalla and the Deputy Governor of Rangoon hastened on board the Commodore's ship. They represented that the Yellow Ship was sacred, and its seizure was a public insult to the royal dignity, and requested the Commodore to release the ship—but he refused. On 11 January, the Governor formally agreed to pay the compensation demanded and to appoint a Resident. No reply was given by Lambert, who simply forwarded the offer to the Government of India.

But the Commodore did not remain idle. He now tried to provoke the Burmese into hostility. On January 10, the British men of war moved down the river to carry out the blockade. Some of these not only steamed close past the Burmese stockades, as if to challenge them, but passed and repassed them "with an unmistakable meaning", as Arnold puts it. But the Burmese kept quiet. Next morning, therefore, the "Hermes" was directed to steam by with her prize, the "Yellow Ship", that is the King's ship held sacred by the Burmese. This time Lambert's anticipations proved to be correct. "As the "Hermes", with the "Yellow Ship", came abreast of the "Da Silva" battery, the English drum "beat to quarters", her Captain knowing very well what would follow. Eleven guns (from the Burmese battery) opened upon the "Hermes", and at once, as if also ready and eager, the Commodore hoisted the signal to engage the enemy".[8b] What followed is thus described by Dalhousie in a private letter to Sir George Couper, dated 23rd January, 1852: "He (Lambert) anchored; sent the "Fox's" broadside into the stockade where were 3,000 men who disappeared to a man, and then destroyed their war boats and spiked and sank their guns".[8c] Most British writers ignore or minimise the enormity of this crime of Lambert.[8d] But Arnold contrasts this tragic act of cruelty, involving a heavy carnage, with the readiness of the Governor of Rangoon to concede practically all the demands of the British, and rightly comments: "It is hard to avoid the impression that war was all along intended by us".[8e]

Similar incidents of a minor character were repeated. In order to prevent them, the Governor wrote to Lambert asking him to secure previous permission for his ships to proceed up or down the river. But this was not done and the incidents continued.

It is now known on good authority that Dalhousie disapproved the arrogant attitude and hasty actions of Lambert. On January 23, he wrote to Broughton that "these Commodores are too combustible for negotiations." Later on he was more explicit and wrote: "There is no doubt that Lambert was the immediate cause of the war by seizing the King's ship, in direct disobedience of his orders from me. I accepted the responsibility of his act, but disapproved and censured it."[9] It is a sad commentary on the British Government that all the despatches expressing Dalhousie's disapproval of Lambert's act were suppressed in the Blue-Book, as Dalhousie himself admits, and the Parliamentary Papers contain no indication of his attitude of regret.[10]

But whatever might be the real feelings of Dalhousie, as Governor-General he conveyed his approval of all the acts of Lambert. The Government of India wrote on January 26, accepting the terms offered by the Governor of Rangoon on January 11, but insisted that he should express in writing his deep regret for the insult offered to the deputation on January 6. In his reply dated February 2, the Governor complained of Lambert's conduct and pointed out that the version received by the Government of India about the insult to the British deputation was one-sided and did not represent the whole truth But nevertheless he was prepared to make a satisfactory arrangement about other matters.

This reply did not satisfy Dalhousie and he refused to send any envoy to discuss the terms of settlement, as to do so would be "to tamely submit to national insult." After having discussed in a lengthy minute, on February 12, the question of national prestige involved in the Burmese affair he concluded that his Government had "no alternative but to exact reparation by force of arms." But if they are refused, "operations of war should commence."

Shortly afterwards Dalhousie received a direct communication from the King of Burma. To this he sent an official reply on February 18, practically giving an ultimatum to the latter. He demanded the removal of the Governor of Rangoon and expression of regret by the King of Burma through his ministers for the incident of June 6, immediate payment of ten lakhs of Rupees, and acceptance of a British Agent at Rangoon. If these demands were accepted without further negotiations, and fulfilled on or before April 1 next, hostile operations would be stayed. But if these "just and lenient conditions are refused, the British Government will have no alternative but immediate war."

The Government of India had begun military preparations for the Burmese War as soon as the first reports from Lambert reached

them, that is, on or before January, 1852, when reinforcements were sent to Moulmein. As soon as Dalhousie returned to Calcutta (January 29) the preparations were in full swing. Lieutenant General Godwin was appointed the Commander of the expedition, and Rear-Admiral Austen, Commander-in-Chief of His Majesty's naval forces in the Eastern seas, was placed in charge of naval operations. The expeditionary force was composed of detachments of Bengal and Madras armies, and in the light of experience gained in the First Burmese War satisfactory arrangements were made for the supply of food and transport, and the prevention and treatment of Malaria. For all these great credit is due to the personal exertions of the Governor-General. The difficulties of the First War were repeated when the 38th Native Infantry at Barrackpur refused to go to Burma by sea. But here, again, Dalhousie profited by the past experience. He justly concluded that it was not disloyalty, or mutiny, or insubordination, and held that "the men had a right to decline, and they acted perfectly within their military rights in declining" to proceed by sea. He wanted to avoid the error of 1824 "when from some misunderstanding and want of judicious and temperate handling, the Native troops were at length massacred as mutineers" He therefore ordered the Regiment to proceed to Arakan by road, via Dacca. This action was severely condemned by a section of the British. According to some contemporary newspapers, Dalhousie was the first Governor-General to succumb to mutineers. The anonymous author of the Red pamphlet (probably Malleson), published immediately after the outbreak of the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857, declared with reference to the decision of Dalhousie that "from that moment a revolt became a mere question of time and opportunity."[11]

The Indo-Burmese relations in February and March, 1852, were confusing in the extreme. Negotiations were still going on, but minor hostilities continued in the land and water of Burma, and all the while brisk military preparations were being made on both sides for the coming war. Lord Dalhousie hoped to be able to avoid a major military operation by terrorising Burma into abject submission by strong measures of coercion at the very beginning. In case of the refusal of the King of Burma to accept his terms of February 18, General Godwin was requested "to strike promptly a powerful blow which might reduce the Burmese to reason." This "blow" was suggested to be the occupation of Martaban and Rangoon. If the Burmese made overtures for peace after that, the compensation was to be increased to 15 lakhs plus three lakhs for every month, after 1st May, until full payment was made. This ultimatum was to expire on October 1.

These overtures, actual or contingent, have been represented by the apologists of Dalhousie as indicating his sincere desire for peace.[12] It is, however, difficult to accept this interpretation. The compensation, first of nine thousand Rupees, then suddenly raised, first to ten lakhs, and then to fifteen lakhs or more, and the other demands like unqualified expression of regret and removal of the Governor of Rangoon, on the *ex parte* statement of British officials without any hearing of the other side, are of so exorbitant a character, and the manner of the demand is so unusually harsh and vindictive for one independent State to adopt against another, that they are incompatible with a genuine desire for peace, as one would normally understand the expression. All that can be urged in his favour is that if he could, by threat and coercion, gain all his arrogant demands and humiliate the King of Burma to an extent dictated by his own ideal of what British prestige required in oriental countries, he would have desisted from war.

Lord Dalhousie's position may be likened to that of a bandit chief who asked a householder, at the point of revolver, to surrender his valuables, and killed him when he refused to do so. He might well have exclaimed like Dalhousie. "God knows I lament the alternative, but I did not create it," or "God! He knows how fervently I desired to avert this necessity".[12a] Dalhousie's pious platitudes, too frequently repeated, to the effect that he "sought no conquest or pretext for war", are not unlikely to provoke the comment: "Madam, you seem to protest too much". They are at the best self-delusions of an extraordinary type, and at the worst, most hypocritical expressions deliberately designed to delude the public.

Taking into consideration not only the sentimental effusions of Dalhousie, but all the facts and circumstances of the case, it is difficult to agree with those who hold that he did not want war; it will be perhaps more correct to say that he did not apprehend war. But this is not a high compliment and does not place him in the category of a pacifist any more than Kaiser Wilhelm, Hitler and Mussolini who would certainly not have gone to war if they could have everything in their own way without it. It is also not unlikely that his so-called "peace-offers" were due to other reasons. In his diary he wrote that he was resolved not to "engage in a war with Ava with the hot season approaching; but would commence operation only with the opening of the cold season of 1852". One is certainly entitled to the belief that his ultimatums, expiring on 1st April and 1st October were really designed cleverly to gain this end.

It is difficult to withhold sympathy from the King of Burma, and to deny a great deal of force in his official statement to Dalhousie

that he wondered whether the Government of India had deputed Lambert "simply to dispose of the question relating to the merchants, or whether he has been sent to begin by an attack, which should have the effect of bringing on hostilities between the two countries."[13] Indeed any one who looks at the whole situation in a long perspective, particularly the choice of Lambert, the gradually stiffening attitude of Dalhousie in spite of the arrogant acts of Lambert which he disapproved, and the unusual and unnecessary rudeness with which both Lambert and Dalhousie pressed their demands, may well be excused for the belief that the whole affair was pre-arranged and dictated by the policy of consolidating British authority in Burma in order to forestall the French measures in the same direction. Such a view, no doubt, lacks positive evidence, but cannot be rejected altogether as a possible hypothesis. For it may readily be admitted that while the tone of Dalhousie's communications to the king of Burma was such as one independent State should never use towards another, the Court of Ava and the Governor of Rangoon offered such an abject submission to the most unreasonable and harsh demands couched in the most dictatorial tone, as no independent State could be expected to do. John Lawrence hit the nail right on the head when he wrote to the Private Secretary of Lord Dalhousie: "Why did you send a Commodore to Burma if you wanted peace?" It is difficult to accept Lord Dalhousie's defence on the point. "It is easy," he said, "to be wise after the fact. If I had the gift of prophecy, I would not have employed Lambert to negotiate."[14] This is a sad confession, but one might well ask why he supported the acts of Lambert even though he disapproved of them.

But, as Dalhousie says in the same letter, he was not sure, that but for Lambert's act "the war would not have been just as it has been." The war was really due to Dalhousie's conception of British prestige in the East. As far back as April 24, 1852, he wrote: "This is not a question of insult merely, but of injury...The simple question is whether, before all Asia, England will submit to Ava..." In another letter he remarked, "we can't afford to be shown to the door anywhere in the East; there are too many doors to our residence there to admit of our submitting to that movement safely at any one of them."[15]

So Dalhousie's idea was that for the sake of prestige the British Government could not budge an inch from the position it had taken even if it were proved to be wrong, and the British would not leave any country, once being in, even if they were not wanted. He also entertained a very low opinion of the dignity and understanding of the oriental rulers. When even the President of the Board of Con-

trol objected to his letter to the Court of Ava, dated February 18, "as couched in too severe terms", Lord Dalhousie defended himself by saying that the language of diplomacy employed in communications between civilised States is not applicable to the East and would exercise no influence on a potentate in India or Burma who only understands the language of a bully.[16]

The keynote of Dalhousie's policy was to maintain British interest and prestige everywhere in the East, if necessary, by war, if possible, by less violent means. His sense of British prestige has been embodied in the petty typical saying, 'my country right or wrong'; and he constantly brought it home to oriental rulers by deliberately assuming towards them a haughty and arrogant attitude backed by bayonet and musket rather than fairness and justice.

Fortunately for humanity it was one of his own most distinguished countrymen who was foremost in exposing the true nature of Dalhousie's policy in Burma. In a pamphlet entitled *How wars are got up in India; the origin of the Burmese War,* Cobden has ruthlessly condemned the whole transaction from the beginning. Another British writer has exposed the real motive behind Lord Dalhousie's action. "It was", says Arnold, "because the Americans and French, but principally the former, were busy in the Eastern Seas, and notably looking towards the delta of the Irawaddy that the hiatus between Arakan and Moulmein disquieted Dalhousie".[16a]

Of course apologists and supporters of Dalhousie have never been wanting, at least in his own country. Many of them have offered specious reasonings and ignored hard and positive facts, while emphasizing the pious platitudes which fill the letters, minutes, and despatches of Dalhousie. But even if we take them at their face value, a public man like Dalhousie must be judged by his actions and not mere sentiments. As usual, these apologists have relied on the time-worn plea of differences between the east and the west and between the ideas of the nineteenth and the twentieth century. These specious arguments certainly would not cut much ice at the present moment when European colonialism, superiority of western culture, white men's burden etc., are all dying creeds. They may explain, but do not certainly excuse in the least, the high-handed acts of Lord Dalhousie.

B. *The Second Burmese War*[17]

Reference has been made above to the elaborate preparations made by Dalhousie for the Burmese campaign. General Godwin started from Calcutta on March 25, and arrived at Rangoon on April 2 Admiral Austen had arrived on the previous day, and Madras

troops joined on April 7. The total strength of the expeditionary force was 19 ships, 159 guns and 8,489 men.

It is hardly necessary to describe at length the minor clashes or sporadic acts of hostilities that had been going on since Lambert began his blockade on January 6, 1852. On the very day that General Godwin arrived in Rangoon, the British steamer 'Proserpine', under a flag of truce, was sent to Rangoon, to find out whether the Burmese Government had sent any reply to Dalhousie's ultimatum, the date of which had expired on the previous day, i.e., April 1. The steamer was fired at from a Burmese stockade, but did not suffer any damage, and returned the fire. On April 5, Lambert destroyed two stockades below Rangoon, and Martaban was captured by the joint operation of the army and the navy.

The war which thus began in a formal way was short but decisive. The British forces now proceeded to Rangoon. The main attack commenced on April 12, and the city was captured on the 14th. Bassein was next attacked, and it fell on May 19. On the east the British repulsed several Burmese attacks on Martaban and then proceeded towards Pegu, the Talaing inhabitants of which, according to an official despatch of Godwin, had appealed to the British for help against the Burmese.[18] The city of Pegu was captured and restored to a member of the old ruling family. On July 9, the British captured Prome and defeated a part of General Bandula's army, capturing 28 guns, but they retired as their number was not sufficient to occupy it permanently.

In spite of these serious reverses the Burmese Government made no overtures for peace. Nor were they intent upon opposing the further advance of the British. They evidently relied on the coming rains and difficult terrain, and hoped that General Monsoon, with all the attendant epidemics, would be more than a match for the British. They were not perhaps altogether wrong. Dalhousie also, after serious considerations, gave up the idea of a march into the interior beyond Prome, on account of the loss of men, money and time that it would involve. So, after a lull in the military operations, the British flotilla advanced towards Prome and landed forces on October 9 and 10, but found the city evacuated. Pegu, which had been seized by the Burmans from the Talaings was recaptured by the British on November 21, 1852. Small expeditions were sent both from Prome and Pegu into the interior.

The studied silence of the Court of Ava created a great problem. They would neither fight nor treat for peace. The home authorities, in the flush of military success, thought of advance towards Ava, but Dalhousie, as before, steadily opposed this project. He

formulated his policy in an elaborate minute on June 30, 1852.[19] After considering all possible alternatives he recommended the annexation of the entire province of Pegu extending somewhat above Prome. He pointed out the great advantages of this course. In the first place, the new province would unite the British provinces of Arakan and Tenasserim, and the whole would thus form a consolidated unit, giving the British command over the whole sea-coast and sea-trade. This, as well as the fact that Upper Burma was dependent upon the trade and produce of Pegu, would give them a 'coercive influence hardly inferior to the influence of arms.' Secondly, the province had an excellent climate, fertile soil, and rich resources, particularly valuable forests of teak.

Dalhousie supported his view that the annexation should not extend beyond Pegu, on the two following grounds. In the first place, the British Government would not have to deal with hostile populations as the Talaings hated their old enemies, the Burmans, and would welcome their new master.

Secondly, the Province was protected by natural boundaries or British territories on all sides except the north, and so the expenses of defence of the newly acquired territory would be reduced to a minimum.

The Governor-General's Council as well as the Home authorities were convinced by these arguments. The latter, however, insisted that the formal annexation of Pegu must be preceded by a treaty with the Court of Ava on that basis, or by the subjugation of the whole kingdom of Burma.

Accordingly, on November 16, 1852, Dalhousie wrote a letter to the King of Burma accompanied by a draft of the proposed treaty. But this was done merely to satisfy the authorities at home. Dalhousie never expected that the King of Burma would formally execute a treaty, ceding a part of his kingdom. Nor did he really desire such a treaty. For he held that such a treaty would be a source of constant friction; what really counted with the Burmans was the fear of British power and not the solemn obligations of a treaty. So long as the former existed, the latter was unnecessary; and when the former would cease, the latter would be more than useless

So, although no reply was received from Ava, Captain Phayre, the Commissioner-designate of Pegu, issued a proclamation on December 19, 1852, annexing Pegu. In the meantime a Palace revolution in Ava placed Mindon, half-brother of King Pagan Min, on the throne (February 1853). He was opposed to the war and on his accession adopted a friendly attitude towards the British. On March 31, 1853, three Burmese Officers arrived at Prome to negotiate a

treaty. But difficulties arose over the boundary of the annexed province. The draft treaty fixed the northern frontier of the British territory six English miles north from the fort of Meeaday (on the Irawadi about 30 miles north of Prome) which was fixed as the boundary by the proclamation. The Burmese envoys opposed it on the ground that it was not in accordance with the proclamation. General Godwin and Commodore Lambert agreed that they were right. Even Dalhousie authorised Phayre to accept Prome as boundary and wrote: "Public opinion is adverse to the war and would strongly, and I think justly, condemn this Government, if it lost a treaty merely for the difference between Meeaday and Prome."[20] Nevertheless, Phayre stuck to the boundary proposed in the treaty, and negotiations broke down. But although a regular treaty was not concluded, the new King of Burma issued formal orders to his officers to desist from attacks on the British forces, and released English prisoners In response to the King's request Irawadi was opened to traders from Upper Burma. General Godwin, with the major part of the expeditionary force, returned to India. Thus a state of peace was restored in Burma, in fact, if not in theory. Though cordial relations were established and friendly missions were exchanged between the two Courts in 1854 and 1855, the King of Burma refused to sign a formal treaty.

III. ASSAM

A. *The British Conquest*

Reference has been made above[1] to the chaos and confusion, prevailing in the petty state of Assam on the north-eastern frontier of Bengal, at the beginning of the nineteenth century. This was mainly due to the peculiar form of government which conferred upon three hereditary Councillors, known as Gohains, and two hereditary ministers, called Bar Barua and Bar Phukan, a number of great powers and privileges restricting, to a considerable extent, even the authority of the king. After the death of king Gaurinath Singh in A.D. 1795,[2] the Bura Gohain, Purnānanda, murdered his rival, the Bar Barua, and placed on the throne his own nominee Kamaleswar Singh, an illegitimate descendant of a former king of Assam. Throughout his reign Purnananda was the *de facto* ruler of the country.

The queen of deceased Gaurinath was living in Bengal as a pensioner of the East India Company. In A.D. 1806, she represented to the British Governor-General that Kamaleswar Singh had no title to the throne, and requested him to assist her own nominee Brajanath Singh, descendant of a king of Assam who ruled from

1751 to 1769, to secure the throne. Kamaleswar Singh also approached the Governor-General for military assistance against the *Barkandazes* (mercenaries) of Bengal who had been carrying on depredations in various parts of Assam. The British Government, however, followed the principle of strict neutrality and non-interference in the affairs of other countries, and refused the request of both. But the British supplied arms to the Assam Government.

Kamaleswar Singh died in 1810 and was succeeded by his brother Chandrakānta Singh. Purnānanda continued to be the *de facto* ruler of the State, but Chandrakānta wanted to get rid of him. There was a conspiracy in 1814 to murder Purnānanda, but it came to nothing. Whether the king himself was privy to this, cannot be definitely ascertained,[3] but it seems very likely; for in a letter to the British Governor-General, written in 1815, Chandrakānta made very serious allegations against Purnānanda, including the murder of the two immediately preceding Kings, and asked for military assistance to put him down. But the wrath of Purnānanda fell upon Badan Chandra, the Bar Phukan, who was administering the district of Gauhāti. Badan Chandra was a powerful rival and was justly suspected of being one of the conspirators against Purnānanda. Scenting danger, Badan fled to Bengal and sought for assistance from the British Government, but in vain.

Badan Chandra now took a step which was big with future consequences. Having failed to secure help from the western neighbour, he turned to the eastern. Burma was then a very powerful State and, after protracted negotiations at its capital city Amarapur, Badan succeeded in inducing Bodawpaya, the powerful king of Burma, to send an expedition to Assam(A.D. 1817). The Assamese troops were severely defeated by the Burmese army which occupied Jorhāt, the capital of Assam Purnānanda had died in the meantime and his son Ruchināth fled to Gauhāti. So Badan Chandra was placed in his position and Chandrakānta maintained his throne by conciliating the Burmese.

But as soon as the Burmese troops left the country there was a conspiracy in the palace. Badan was assassinated, and Ruchināth seized the kingdom. In February, 1818, he drove away Chandrakānta and placed on the throne his own protégé Purandar Singh, son of Brajanāth, mentioned above, whose claims were once pressed upon the British Government by the queen of Gaurināth Singh in 1806.

Once more Ruchināth applied in vain to the British for military assistance. But Badan Chandra's friends were more successful with the court of Amarapura. A Burmese army successfully invaded

Assam in 1819, and reinstated Chandrakānta on the throne. Both Ruchināth and his protégé fled to Bengal. The Governor-General refused the request of the Burmese Government to surrender them, but declined to help them in regaining their power in Assam.

The Burmese forces gradually withdrew from Assam, so that their total number in Assam at the beginning of 1821 did not exceed 100. Chandrakānta, shocked by the barbarous cruelties of the Burmese and irritated by their domineering influence, took this opportunity to make an attempt to throw off the yoke of the Burmese. He requested Ruchināth and other influential Assamese refugees in Bengal to return and form a general union against their common foe. While this appeal went unheeded, events were happening in Burma which sealed the fate of Assam. The old king Bodawpaya died in A.D. 1819 and was succeeded by his grandson Bagyidaw. A new party arose in the court, eager to make the Burmese authority more effective in Assam by annexing it to the Burmese Empire. The first indication of this new policy was given by the expulsion of the king of Manipur who had failed to attend the coronation ceremony of Bagyidaw. The Burmese now turned their attention to Assam and sent a small force. They witnessed the preparations made by Chandrakānta for defence against Burma, and tried to win him over by a friendly gesture. But Chandrakānta was suspicious of their real motive, and as the Burmese force advanced, he fled to Gauhāti (March 14, 1821) After some fruitless attempts to induce Chandrakānta to return, the Burmese declared him to be deposed and installed Jogeswar Singh as the new king He was, of course, a mere puppet in the hands of the Burmese who wielded the real authority [4]

While Chandrakānta was at Gauhāti Purandar Singh advanced with a force from Bhutan. Though Chandrakānta succeeded in repelling this attack, a strong Burmese force advanced against him, and he had to flee, first to Assam Choky, and then, being pursued by the Burmese, to Goālpārā in the British territory. The Burmese officially wrote to the British Government to surrender Chandrakānta and other refugees, but the Governor-General refused this request, on the usual ground, that it was against the British usage and convention to surrender political refugees. The Government of India, however, now took interest in the affairs of Assam, and in view of the establishment of a strong power in the neighbouring province they partially gave up their old policy of neutrality. Although they were not prepared yet to support the Assamese refugees against the Burmese, they indirectly helped them by offering facilities to secure arms and ammunitions in the British territory. To-

wards the end of October, 1821, Chandrakānta returned to the Assam Choky, and availed himself of the facilities offered by the British to purchase 300 muskets and 90 maunds of gun-powder. He then advanced against the Burmese and, having defeated them in several skirmishes, occupied Gauhāti.[4a]

While Chandrakānta halted at Gauhāti to consolidate his authority, the Burmese Government sent a large army, reputed to be of about 20,000 men, under their ablest general Maha Bandula[5] to drive him away. A severe engagement took place at Kaliani Pathar on April 17, 1822, and though Chandrakānta fought with great valour he was defeated and fled, first to Gauhāti and then to Assam Choky. Being defeated there in another engagement on June 21, 1822, he took refuge in the British territory.

The defeat of Chandrakānta on June 21, 1822, marks the end of the Ahom sovereignty in Assam. Chandrakānta's forces were dispersed, and in February, 1823, he was lured to return to Assam on the Burmese invitation to restore him to the throne He was kept in confinement and thus ended his eventful career.

The Burmese were notorious for the cruelties they perpetrated upon the vanquished even in Burma. In Assam they were guilty of horrible acts of barbarity. Many instances of inhuman torture and cruelty practised by the Burmese have been recorded by eye-witnesses and contemporaries. It is on record that on one occasion men, women and children, about 200 in number, were forcibly thrust into a bamboo structure which was then put on fire. The Burmese robbed the people of almost everything they possessed, burnt down villages and temples, put innocent persons to death in large number and violated the chastity of women It is even alleged that the Burmese cut off choice portions of living persons and actually ate the raw flesh before the living sufferers [6]

The state of things improved to some extent after the Burmese took over the administration of Assam. Maha Bandula left with the bulk of his army and a new Governor was appointed in Assam. He introduced a regular system of administration and put an end to murder, pillage, rapine and forcible extortion of money. But the memory of the wanton and barbaric cruelties made the Burmans odious to the Assamese, and no wonder that they welcomed the British when they declared war against the Burmese.

To the south of Assam and the east of Sylhet in Bengal lay the small principality of Cāchār, bordering on two other petty principalities, namely, Jaintia on the north-west and Manipur in the east. In the heydays of their power, the Ahoms, the ruling people of

Assam, exercised suzerainty over Cāchār. The king of Assam had obtained a victory over the king of Cāchār early in the nineteenth century A.D., but the latter was allowed to rule on payment of the customary tribute of horses and elephants. In A.D. 1813, Govinda Chandra became king of Cāchār. One of his servants, Tularam, rebelled against him and, with the help of Rām Singh, the ruler of Jaintia, made himself independent in the northern part of the kingdom. But the greatest danger of Cāchār came from Manipur.

Manipur bordered on Burma and suffered a great deal from the aggressive raids of that kingdom. Early in the nineteenth century it was further weakened by a series of struggles for succession to the throne In A.D. 1812, its ruler Chaurjit Singh was driven away by his brother Marjit Singh with the help of Burma. Chaurjit, having failed to secure the support of Govinda Chandra and the British authorities in Calcutta, joined Tularam and Rām Singh with a view to establishing his authority over Cāchār. Marjit Singh also attacked Cāchār in 1817 and occupied the whole of it But Govinda Chandra, the ruler of Cāchār, was joined by Gambhir Singh, a brother of Chaurjit and Marjit, and the ablest of the three royal brothers of Manipur. Govinda Chandra, who also secured the assistance of some British officers from Sylhet, succeeded in driving away Marjit. But taking advantage of these troubles, Chaurjit and Tularam attacked Cāchār towards the end of A D 1818 and drove away Govinda Chandra who took shelter in Sylhet.

Shortly afterwards, Marjit, being defeated by the Burmese and expelled from Manipur, effected a reconciliation with his two other brothers and joined them in Cāchār. But this fraternal cordiality did not last long. Marjit Singh and Gambhir Singh divided Southern Cāchār among themselves, and forced Chaurjit to seek shelter in Sylhet.[6a] Both the fugitive rulers sought the help of the British. In 1820, Govinda Chandra, the ex-ruler of Cāchār, had offered his territory to be amalgamated with the British district of Sylhet. In 1823, Chaurjit requested the British Government to recognise him as the tributary ruler of Cāchār. Gambhir Singh also, having failed in an attempt to reconquer Manipur from the hands of Burma, proposed to the British that he might be considered a protected prince. But the British authorities, true to the principles of neutrality, turned a deaf ear to these requests.

How the lamentable state of political condition in Assam, Jaintia, Cāchār and Manipur led to the first Burmese War and how it affected the course of the military campaigns have been related above. We have also seen how, by the Treaty of Yandabo (1826), the Burmese Government was forced to renounce its supremacy or

any political pretension over all these States. So, after the conclusion of that treaty the British had to devise measures for the administration of these territories.

B. *The Brahmaputra Valley*

As soon as the British drove away the Burman troops from Assam, a civilian, Scott, and a military officer, Col. Richard, were appointed Commissioners for carrying on the provisional administration of the country. A great deal of difficulty was, however, felt in formulating a definite plan for its future government. In a way the British had committed themselves to the people of Assam to restore their independence after driving away the Burmans. As soon as hostilities had broken out in 1824 the British Government declared as follows: "Although by our expulsion of the Burmese from the territory of Assam the country would of right become ours by conquest, the Governor-General in Council does not contemplate the permanent annexation of any part of it to the British dominion." The British also made it clear that even though it might be necessary to retain possession of a part of the country for some time, it would be a merely temporary arrangement pending the final settlement to be made with the tributary Raj proposed to be established in Assam.[7]

The declaration was no doubt prompted by a desire to enlist the sympathy and support of the people of Assam in the forthcoming war against the Burmans. But when that object was fully served, the British attitude underwent a considerable change. It must be said to the credit of the civilian officer, Scott, that when asked to state his views on the subject, he referred to the pledges given before the War and argued, in a lengthy memorandum, in favour of setting up a native ruling dynasty in Assam as a protected ruler, a system rendered familiar by the political arrangement made with numerous Rājput states by the Marquess of Hastings He recommended that the native prince might be required to pay an annual subsidy of two lakhs of Rupees But as the above arrangements involved some difficulties of a financial and military nature, he suggested, as an alternative measure, that Lower Assam as far as Biswanath should be retained by the Company; the Khâmtis, Moāmāriās and Singphos should be recognised as autonomous tribes; and the rest of Upper Assam be made over to a native prince charged with the duty of military assistance in defending the country[8] The Council of Calcutta, however, no longer gave any weight to their pre-war pledge to restore Assam to a native dynasty, of which they were reminded by Scott in support of his plan. So the plan of Scott

was referred back to him and he again recommended the alternative plan. Even this did not satisfy the Council. They immediately accepted the recommendation concerning Lower Assam, and annexed it, including the Duars, permanently to the Company's dominions. They also accepted Scott's recommendations about the wild tribes of the Khāmtis of Sadiyā under Khawā Gohāin, the Moāmāriās of Mātak (Lakhimpur) under Bar Senāpati, and the Singphos, who, under many chiefs, occupied the country from the border of Mātak to the Dihing river in the east. These territories were formally annexed and the first two were handed over to their chiefs who acknowledged British suzerainty and agreed to supply military contingents by formal treaties executed in May, 1826. An agreement was also drawn up with sixteen Singphos on similar terms in May, 1826, but instead of military force they agreed to supply British troops with information as well as rice and other necessaries in case of any foreign power invading Assam.[9]

But although Lower Assam, including the Duars, was annexed and the easternmost frontier districts were handed over to the tribal chiefs, the British Government could not make any final decision regarding the central part of Assam, and it continued to be administered by the British. This breach of pledge caused grave discontent among the nobility who also suffered heavily by some of the new measures introduced by the British, such as the abolition of the *paik* system. The discontent led to some minor outbreaks, such as the rebellion, in 1828, of Gadādhar, a prince of the royal blood. He had accompanied the Assamese princess who was presented by King Chandrakānta to the Burmese King in 1818, and lived there since that time. He came back, it was alleged, with the support of the Burmese Court, and placed himself at the head of the discontented nobles. He declared himself *Rājā*, gathered a small force around him, and called upon the people to rise against the British rule. The rebellion was, however, easily suppressed within a short time. Gadādhar was sentenced to capital punishment by the *"Pātra Mantrī"*, the Grand Panchāyat or Local Assembly, before whom he was first tried, but the sentence was commuted by the British Government to banishment for seven years.[10]

The Singphos broke out into insurrection in 1830. Taking advantage of this the nobility also broke out in open revolt under Kumār Rupchānd. They tried to excite the various tribes and planned an organised rising against the British Rāj. They attacked the military lines at Rangpur on March 25, 1830, but were easily repulsed. Two of the ring-leaders were executed and the rest were confined in jail in Dacca.[11]

The Khasi rebellion of 1829 at first took a serious turn. The rebellion continued for nearly four years and was not brought to an end till January, 1833, as will be related later. The Singphos' rebellion in 1830 also assumed at first a formidable aspect, as will be related later.[12]

The rebellions of the nobility brought to the forefront the question of permanently settling the form of government in Upper Assam. Mr. Scott submitted various schemes on the basis of the restoration of a native prince, but these were not approved by the Calcutta Council. The main difficulty seems to have been caused by the problem of defence of the eastern frontier. The British Government did not like the idea of spending 'money to protect an unprofitable and isolated piece of land around Sadiya when the profitable and popular part (Jorhat Division) was to be given over to a native monarch'. While Scott reminded them of the promise made to the people of Assam before the war, the Governor-General, Lord Bentinck, held that as the British had conquered Assam from the Burmans without any help from the ruler or peoples of Assam none of them had any moral claim upon the British. The sudden death of Scott, in August 1831, caused further delay in settling the question. His successor, Robertson, recommended that if the Government could spare a sufficient number of European officers, Upper Assam should be retained as an integral part of the British dominions. The Governor-General, however, ultimately approved of Scott's policy of setting up a native government and this was accepted by the Council.

Of the two pretenders or candidates for the throne, Chandrakānta and Purandar Singh, the choice ultimately fell upon the latter Accordingly, a treaty was concluded on March 2, 1833, at Gauhāti by which Purandar Singh became the ruler of Upper Assam extending from Burhat to Dhansiri river on payment of an annual tribute of fifty thousand Rupees, nearly half of the net revenue He promised to introduce reforms, follow the advice of the British agents stationed at Sadiya and Gauhāti, and refrain from holding any communication with any foreign power. On April 28, 1833, Purandar Singh was formally installed and later he was given the pompous title, "Sri Maharaja Purandar Singh Narendra "

But soon the attitude of the British Government underwent a sudden change and they regretted the alienation of an extensive district. So the treaty was recast on June 27, in the form of an agreement and the great 'Maharaja' became overnight more or less a *Jāgirdār* holding the Jorhat Division by a Sanad. It may be added that the Court of Directors were also in favour of retaining Upper

Assam as a part of the British dominions, and were highly indignant that the Bengal Government handed it over to a native prince without referring the question to them. They even thought of annulling the treaty and were somewhat consoled at the substitution of an agreement for a treaty.[13]

After all this it is not a matter of surprise that the Political Agent, Mr. Jenkins, reported that the administration of Purandar Singh was unsatisfactory[14] and that both the nobility and people in general would be better satisfied with the European management of the country.[15] Jenkins recommended that Purandar Singh, who was nothing better than the manager of an estate, should be called upon to relinquish his post on a suitable pension. In a demi-official letter dated April 4, 1838, the Agent described Purandar Singh, who had earned reputation as a benevolent administrator in 1834, as "a rapacious miser, one of the worst characters we could have put over the unfortunate country."[16] He adduced proofs of Raja's rapacity from an anonymous petition. So Purandar Singh was formally dethroned or discharged from his *Jāgīr* in October 1838, and retired on a pension of Rs. 1,000 a month.

The charges against Purandar Singh and his administration need not be scrutinised in detail. There were no doubt arrears in the payment of tribute and mal-administration to a certain degree, but, as Purandar Singh pointed out, all this was mostly due to the arrangement forced upon him by the British, and Mr. White agreed with this view to a large extent. But the fact remains that the case of Purandar Singh, embodied in his petitions, never received any fair hearing. He was a victim of expansionist or aggressive imperialistic policy whch inspired the British Government at this period.[17]

The frontier districts of Assam as well as Cāchār and Jaintia which were placed under Indian chiefs after the first Burmese War, were all, one by one, annexed to the British dominions so that the whole of Assam formed an integral part of British India. It is unnecessary to describe in detail the process by which all these were absorbed into the British dominions. But there were several common features. The natural resources or strategic importance of these places from military point of view increased their value in the eyes of the British. This, added to the aggressive imperialism or policy of annexation which gradually dominated British politics in India in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, sealed the fate of these tiny States. Politicians seldom lack excuses for acts decided upon on ground of policy. In the case of Assam and neighbouring States, the Political Agent recommended their annexa-

tion on ground of the personal character of the ruler or his mal-administration, and failure to pay tribute. There were, in some cases, some foundations for these charges, but they were almost always highly exaggerated, and in not a few cases, without any foundation or positive evidence. In almost all cases the supreme Government made *ex parte* decisions on the basis of the reports of their local agents who were themselves the accusers. If any one scrutinises the issues raised in the different cases he would perhaps agree that none of these annexations can be justified strictly from legal or moral point of view. It is not, however, possible to undertake such scrutiny here and only the bare facts may be mentioned without any comment. It may be added that almost all the annexations were justified by the plea that the people concerned preferred the British to native rule. The specious nature of the plea was exposed in some cases by positive demonstrations of popular feeling in favour of the displaced rulers, and may be regarded as, at best, very doubtful in the other cases.

C. *Cāchār*

As has been mentioned above,[18] the declaration of Cāchār as a British protectorate precipitated the First Anglo-Burmese War. But even while, after the conclusion of that war, Govinda Chandra was restored to the throne, the British Government instructed the Commissioner of Sylhet "to ascertain whether the Raja was still willing to cede the Cachar Raj to the Company" This attitude persisted till the State was actually annexed. The poor Raja's territory, already devastated by the war, was attacked by Tularam from one side and Gambhir Singh of Manipur from the other.[19] The British Government failed to give him protection but forced him to appoint Tularam, once his table-servant, as the Commander of his forces, and give him formal charges of the hill districts which he had already seized by force. An agreement to this effect was signed in July, 1829. Govinda Chandra complained to the British against the usurpation of his territory by Gambhir Singh. Although the claims of the latter were proved to be illegal to the satisfaction of the British Government, they again forced Govinda Chandra to assign a piece of territory to Gambhir Singh on lease for fifteen years. This enabled Gambhir Singh, with the connivance, if not actual support, of the British agent, to encroach further and further upon the kingdom of Cāchār. These were no doubt clever ruses adopted by the British Government in order to bring pressure upon Govinda Chandra for the cession of Cāchār, which had a very rich soil and contained abundant supply of valuable timber. Alarmed

at the incessant demands of the British for the transfer of his kingdom, Govinda Chandra wanted to adopt a child to ensure future succession, but the Supreme Government discouraged the idea. At this critical juncture Govinda Chandra was assassinated on April 24, 1830, and it was definitely proved that "the murder had been planned and executed with the knowledge, and under the direction, of Raja Gambhir Singh of Manipur."[20] A personal servant of the latter was implicated, but though there were proofs against him he was not even arrested, as "that would have been tantamount to the public accusation of his own master Gambhir Singh."[21]

Govinda Chandra had no son, and was not permitted to adopt; so, after his death, there were various claimants to the vacant throne. Tularam's claim was set aside on the ground that he did not belong to the royal family. The next claimant was Govindaram, the natural son of Krishna Chandra, brother of Govinda Chandra, by a slave girl. But as he could not satisfactorily establish his paternity, his claim was rejected. Chandraprabhā, widow of Govinda Chandra, asked for recognition either as a sovereign princess or as a *zamindar*. The British Government set her aside on two grounds. In the first place, no woman had ever ascended the throne of Cāchār; and secondly, she had first married Krishna Chandra and, after his death, became the wife of his brother Govinda Chandra; it was a custom, not approved by the Hindus. There was a Council of forty men of royal descent, known as "Forty Sempongs" who claimed the right of selecting a king, but the British Government held that the right was not exercised for a long time and had therefore lapsed. Gambhir Singh, ruler of Manipur, who was held responsible for the murder of Govinda Chandra, was a candidate for the throne, and his claim was supported by the Commissioner of Manipur; but the people of Cāchār hated this tyrannical ruler. Having thus disposed of all the claims the British Government annexed Cāchār. Of course, the usual plea was not wanting, namely, that the people of Cāchār wanted to be placed under the British rule. In the case of Cāchār, the plea was advanced even during the lifetime of Govinda Chandra. In 1829, Mr. Tucker, the Commissioner of Sylhet, wrote to the Governor-General in Council that "for the peace and happiness of the inhabitants of the country now suffering under every change, something should definitely be settled; a successor to the Raja should be selected, or it should be declared that the British Government should assume the sovereignty of the country on the death of the present Raja as the paramount lord and the natural successor of the State having no heir to the Raj."[21a] The British Government neither ap-

pointed a successor, nor allowed the king to adopt one, and so the remaining alternative was adopted.

Tularam, the rebel chief, was confirmed in the possession of the hill portions which he already possessed by virtue of the treaty of 1829 with Govinda Chandra, noted above. As he was guilty of making depredations on the plains of Cāchār, a fresh treaty was concluded with him in November, 1834, by which Central Cāchār was annexed by the British Government and Tularam was allowed to retain only the hilly eastern part of Cāchār, on payment of a small tribute. On the death of Tularam in 1851, Captain Butler, who was in charge of Cāchār, recommended the annexation of his dominions on the ground that Tularam held it only on life-tenure. Dalhousie, however, held that the term of the treaty did not show that it was a life-tenure and even the alleged violation of the agreement did not justify annexation. Although he admitted that the possession of the tract would be highly beneficial, he held that "something more than that consideration is necessary to justify our resuming it"

This 'something' turned up in 1853 Tularam's eldest son Nakulram was engaged in a severe struggle with the Nāgās who had attacked and burnt four or five of his villages, killed 86 persons and carried off about 115 persons as slaves. In return Nakulram invaded the country of the Nāgās and attacked a village, the people of which were innocent of the outrage The act of Nakulram was a violation of article 7 of the treaty whereby he had agreed not to make war without the consent of the British Accordingly, the country was formally annexed to the British dominions in 1854 [22]

D *Jaintia*

Ram Singh, the Raja of Jaintia, was confirmed in his possession after the first Burmese War But towards the end of January, 1832, two British subjects were seized by men from Jaintia with a view to sacrificing them before the goddess Kālī Although the victims escaped, the Raja was severely taken to task. A few months later, three British subjects were reported to have been actually sacrificed. Raja Ram Singh promised to make a full inquiry, particularly about Sobha Singh, the Raja of Gobhā, one of his dependent chiefs, who was implicated in the matter But before he could complete the inquiry Raja Ram Singh died (September, 1832), and was succeeded by his grand-nephew, Rājendra Singh, aged 17 or 15. The Political Agent, Mr. Robertson, drew the attention of the Supreme Government to the fact that under the existing treaty the Raja of Jaintia had to pay no tribute and suggested that the death of the Raja was an excellent opportunity to rectify the mistake.[22a] So the new Raja

was called for an interview and was asked to agree to a new treaty providing for the payment of an annual tribute of Rs. 10,000. The Raja and his ministers pointed out that they had no right to accept the revised treaty without placing it before the *Dolois*, the heads of the petty republics of which the State of Jaintia was composed. The Raja was unceremoniously dismissed and the Supreme Government issued orders that "Rājendra Singh be not recognised as the Raja until he binds himself to contribute towards the general defence of the frontier."

The young Raja was now called upon to surrender Sobha Singh within twenty days, but he failed to do this. Robertson the Political Agent, thereupon represented the Raja as "a habitual promoter of the horrible rites of human sacrifice", looked upon his participation in the case under consideration as 'proved beyond doubt', and recommended his removal from the throne [43] He also addressed the Raja as 'the Manager of the Jaintia state' Even his own masters were not prepared to go so far and reminded Robertson that 'the Chief of Jaintia is entitled to the dignity of a Raja.' But they sent strong remonstrations to the Raja for his failure to arrest the offenders implicated in the atrocity of Gobhā He was at the same time asked to revise the treaty and agree to pay tribute.

In August 1834, Rājendra Singh apprehended four of the offenders and handed them over to the Political Agent who duly reported it to the Government. Nevertheless, suddenly in March 1835, Rājendra Singh was informed that the whole of his ancestral possessions in the plains had been confiscated. The grounds on which this extreme step was taken were the non-delivery of the offenders implicated in the atrocities of Gobhā (who were surrendered six months ago) and the participation of the king himself in these ghastly crimes, though he was never before openly confronted with this charge, and on enquiry Mr. Jenkins found only 'suspicion' and no definite evidence against him

On March 15, 1835, Jaintia Pargana was formally annexed to the British dominion by a formal proclamation, and Gobhā was annexed a few weeks later. Rājendra Singh thereupon voluntarily gave up the hilly tracts of his dominion which were unproductive, and thus the whole of Jaintia passed into the hands of the British.

The dethroned Raja rightly pointed out in a memorial to Auckland: "The outrage at Gobhā was merely the ostensible ground of charge and that the real offence of your memorialist was his silence as to the demand of the tribute." After pointing out that such demand was neither legal nor equitable, the Raja argued that even "in case of refusal the British Government had a perfect right to re-

nounce the treaty and withdraw its protection", but it could "scarcely be just ground for forfeiture."[24] If we remember that the State of Jaintia was a very old one, not created by the British, and voluntarily accepted the British protectorate under certain conditions embodied in a treaty, it is impossible not to agree to the views so ably put forward by the Raja. It must be recorded in fairness to the Court of Directors, that as regards these transactions they took a just and sympathetic view of the siuation. As regards the imposition of tribute they held it improper to impose "a condition on a successor which it was not deemed expedient to impose on the original party." As regards the refusal of the Raja to execute a new treaty they almost echoed the sentiment of the Raja. "If the treaty has expired", said they, 'the Rajah is in the same situation as if none had ever been concluded and our right extends no further than to discontinuing to afford him the benefit of our protection unless he will consent to give a pecuniary equivalent."[25] The Court of Directors denounced, in no uncertain language, the annexation of Jaintia and all the acts of the Indian Government leading thereto. They felt deeply for "this unfortunate Chief," but curiously enough, as in the case of Sindh, they never thought of cancelling the annexation and restoring the Raja to his rightful possession

E. *The Frontier States.*

The political settlements in three frontier districts in the north-east in A.D 1826 have been mentioned above But ere long all of them, like the rest of Assam, were incorporated into the British dominions

(i) *The Singphos.*

The wild peoples, known as Singphos, were not satisfied with the radical changes in their life and vocation which the settlement of 1826 implied. Their predatory habits were incompatible with pursuit of agriculture and commerce, and so they made a bold bid for throwing off the British yoke. The discontented and dispossessed nobility of Assam, including even the ex-king Chandrakānta, are said to have instigated them to rebellion, which actually broke out at the beginning of 1830, as mentioned above. About 2,000 Singphos started from the Hukawng valley, and were joined on the way by another thousand and a body of 500 Khāmtis, armed with spears, swords, and muskets under the leadership of Runua Gohain. On the other hand, many Singpho chiefs helped the British who easily suppressed what looked like a formidable rising. But the Singphos were not reconciled and broke out into rebellion several

times. The last rebellion, which took place in 1843, is said to have been instigated by the Burmese Governor of Hukawng. The suppression of these rebellions broke the solidarity of the Singphos and they were dispersed over a wide area.[26]

(ii) *Sadiyā*

As mentioned above, the Sadiyā Khawā Gohain was recognised as Chief of the Khāmtis in A.D. 1826. On his death in 1835, his son, who succeeded to the Chiefship, was involved in a dispute with the Mātak Chief, Bar Senāpati, over a piece of land claimed by both. Captain White, the Political Agent at Sadiyā, called upon the two chiefs to refer the matter to him, but the Sadiyā Chief, disregarding this, forcibly took possession of the land. For this offence the Political Agent brought the whole of his territory directly under the British administration (A.D. 1835). There was no trouble at the time, but four years later the Khāmtis broke out into rebellion. They suddenly attacked Sadiyā, destroyed the British regiment stationed there, and burnt the barracks. Major White himself was killed in action. With the help of the Mātak Chief, order was restored, and the Khāmtis,—men, women and children,—retired in a body to the Mishmi hills. All the Khāmti villages, so deserted, were burnt to the ground. The rising was not however put down till December 1843 when the last batch of the rebel Khāmtis surrendered themselves.[27]

(iii) *Mātak*

Nemesis, however, overtook Bar Senāpati at no distant date. According to the treaty of 1826, Bar Senāpati, the Chief of the Moāmāriās of Mātak, was required to furnish a contingent of three hundred *pāiks* in lieu of tribute. Since 1834, the Political Agents were eager to impose a tribute upon him but the Supreme Government turned down the proposals. Bar Senāpati died in January, 1839, appointing his third son Maju Gohain as head of the State. The local British authorities were unwilling to approve of this arrangement, and Mr. White visited the capital Rongagorā. He found that even the eldest brother, who was most adversely affected by the arrangement, accepted the decision of his father without demur. White thereupon agreed to sanction the appointment of Maju Gohain on condition that he should pay an annual tribute of Rs. 10,000. This was, however, strongly opposed by all the sons of Bar Senāpati and the entire nobility.

Shortly afterwards the British authorities were informed that the rule of the family of Bar Senāpati was distasteful to the Moāmā-

riās on religious ground So the British Government insisted that the part of Mātak, known as Moran, which was exclusively inhabited by the Moāmāriās, as well as all jungle tracts of the country along with waste lands, should be separated and placed at the disposal of the British This was strenuously opposed not only by Maju Gohain but all the other brothers to whom the offer was made separately. So the British Government annexed Mātak to the Lakhimpur district in November, 1839 [28]

The following abbreviations have been used in the footnotes:

B-I = *The Eastern Frontier of British India* by A C Banerjee (Calcutta, 1934).
B-II = *Annexation of Burma* by A C Banerjee (Calcutta, 1944).
Bh = *Anglo-Assamese Relations* (1771-1826) by S K Bhuyan (Gauhati, 1949)
Wilson = *Documents Illustrative of the Burmese War*, edited by H H Wilson, (Calcutta, 1827)

I. BURMA (up to 1825)

1 Wilson-D (Document No) 174 B
2 Konbaungset Yazawin (Vol II, p 371), quoted in B-I, p 213, f n 2
3 Wilson-D 174 C
4 *Journal of an Embassy*, Vol II, Appendix, p 71
5 This account is based on Bh 462, which slightly differs from that in B-1, pp. 63 ff
6 B-I, pp 152 ff, Bh 463
7 Wilson-D 6, B-I, p 181 Bh 471 This claim 'was repeatedly advanced both in public and in private as far back as 1797 (Wilson, p 5)
8 Wilson-D 7, Bh 473, B-I, 181 As Wilson (p 5) observes, the tone of the Governor-General was moderate due to the exigencies of the Third Maratha War
9 Wilson-D 14 15, 16, B-I, 216
9a Wilson-D 17
9b Wilson-D 18
10 Wilson-D 19, 20 21, 22
11 Dr A C Banerjee regards the Burmese claim to the island of Shahpuri as 'altogether unjustifiable' (B-I, p 217) He evidently relies entirely on British evidence summed up by Wilson (p 11) but, as he himself admits, it is not fair to come to any definite conclusion in the absence of Burmese counter-evidence No disputed claim should be admitted on *ex parte* evidence, where the version of the other side contesting such evidence or claim is not available to us

It is interesting to note, however, that even Edward Thornton, the contemporary British historian, fully conversant with the official records, does not fully support the British claim to the island of Shahpuri "With regard to the title to its possession," says he, "the pretensions of either party do not appear to have been very clearly made out, but the weight of probability inclined to the claim of the English" (Vol V, p 8) It is also not without significance that while the British themselves proposed that "commissioners should be appointed on the part of each Government to make an investigation," they re-occupied the island without waiting for such an inquiry (Ibid. p 9)

12. For detailed account see pp 130-31
13 Wilson-D 12, B-I, 204, which gives reference to the relevant documents. The letter of Amherst clearly reveals the mentality which really led to the First Burmese War
14 "The intelligence of Govinda Chandra's repeated negotiations with Burma did not appear to us under all circumstances to demand any alteration of our previous resolution to re-instate him" (Secret Letter to the Court of Directors, February 23, 1824, para 39. Cf also Secret Consultations, January 17, 1824, Nos. 4, 6 B-1, 205-6)
15 B-1, 207-8
16 Secret Letter to the Court of Directors, February 23, 1824, para 34; B-I, 207.

17. Secret Letter to the Court of Directors, February 23, 1824, paras 2-6; Thornton, V. 14; B-I, 226.
18. Thornton, V. 16.
19. Thornton, V. 16-7.
19a. Wilson-D. 29.
19b. Wilson-D. 30.
19c. Wilson-D 31.
20. The account of the campaign is based on Thornton, V 18 ff.; B-I, Chs. VIII, IX.
21. The following is a good description of a stockade "The unvarying element was a continuous wall, sometimes as high as twenty feet, of solid timber—the stem of bamboos or trunks of saplings from the neighbouring forests. At the top ran horizontal beams which held all firmly together. At intervals were loop-holes for musketry fire Within the enclosure, which was square or oblong, were raised platforms of earth or wood from which small guns could discharge over the paling Inside and outside the stockade were trenches, and on the external face were often abattis formed of trunks of trees" (Ritchie and Evans, *Lord Amherst*, p 93).
22 Thornton, V. 73.
23. Thornton, V. 78.
24. Quoted in Thornton, V. 85
25 Thornton, V 87.
26 Even the Commander-in-Chief could hardly believe that "if we place our frontier in even a tolerable state of defence, any very serious attempt will be made by the Burmese to pass it." (Wilson-D. 24).
27 *CHI*, V 560

II BURMA (1826-1857)

1 B-II. 17
2 For a detailed account, cf B-II. 49 ff.
3 Dr. D. G E Hall observes. "Possibly insufficient examination was made of the claims for compensation against the Burmese authorities so readily put forward by British merchants" (*The Dalhousie-Phayre Correspondence*, Introduction, p xx).
4 B-II 55, f.n 1
5 B-II. 56, f n 1. The passage is quoted below
5a See f n. 5
6 For the passages quoted above, without any reference, cf B II Ch. III.
7 B-II 63 f.n
8 Ibid, 69
8a B-II 69 Laurie gives a somewhat different account (*Second Burmese War*, by F. W. B. Laurie, London, 1853, p 25) According to him Edwardes did not accompany Fishbourne, but "the wily Governor had telegraphed for Mr. Edwardes to come into the presence, which the deputation, of course, would not allow him to do" The account of the interview given by E Arnold is also somewhat different (*Administration of Lord Dalhousie*, Vol II, 41-2)
8b Arnold, II 46
8c Baird, *Private Letters of the Marquis of Dalhousie* (London, 1910), p. 188.
8d In his voluminous biography of Lord Dalhousie, Lee Warner (I. 418) devotes only one sentence to it. "He (Lambert) also rather precipitately seized a ship in the river belonging to the King" Hunter's biography of Dalhousie makes no reference to the incident. Arnold (op cit) gives a short but graphic description of the tragedy.
8e Arnold, II. 43-4.
9 Ibid, 71-2.
10. Ibid, 72, f n.
11. *Red Pamphlet*, p. 9.
12. The British writers, with very few exceptions, have supported Dalhousie's action fully or partially. It would be tedious to refer to them in detail. Some references will be found in B-II. 83-5.
12a. B-II. 77, 84.
13. Ibid, 79.
14. Ibid, 84. Dalhousie's defence, though very poor, is more rational than that of his modern apologist, D. G. E. Hall Replying to Cobden's criticism, similar to that of Lawrence, Hall remarks· "Cobden's criticisms have a twentieth century ring about them .. but he obviously did not understand the real

situation as between Great Britain and Burma, either in its wider aspect or from the purely diplomatic standpoint." (*Dalhousie-Phayre Correspondence*, Introduction, p xxi). This observation has the true British imperialistic ring about it, and is likely to remind one of the trenchant criticism of British "principle" by Bernard Shaw in his "*Man of Destiny*".

15. Ibid, 77-8.
16. Letter dated April 6 (B-II. 81).
16a. Arnold, II. 14.
17. The account of the war is given in detail in B-II. 96 ff.
18. B-II. 114.
19. B-II. 141
20. B-II. 152.

III. ASSAM

ABBREVIATIONS

B-I = *The Eastern Frontier of British India* by A C Banerjee (Calcutta, 1934).
Bhuyan = *Anglo-Assamese Relations* 1771-1826 by S K Bhuyan (Gauhati, 1949).
Lahiri = *The Annexation of Assam* by R M Lahiri (Calcutta, 1954).

1. Vol VIII
2. Bhuyan, p 429. Banerjee gives the date as 1794 (B-I 182)
3. According to Bhuyan (p 449) Chandrakānta gave tacit consent to the plot.
4. Bhuyan, 481 ff., 503
4a Bhuyan, 485 ff, B-I 191
5. Bhuyan (p 490) gives the name as Mingimaha Bandula
6 *Travels and Adventures in the Province of Assam* by Major J Butler (London, 1855) E Gait, *A History of Assam* (Calcutta, 1926), pp 231-2. Bhuyan, 505-8 The outrages in Burma are described by Cordier in *T'oung Pao*, 1891, pp 31 ff
6a. This account, somewhat different from that of Gait (*History of Assam*, 1926, p 257), is based on B-I 202-3, where evidence is given in support of this version
7. The official documents are quoted by Lahiri (pp 29-30).
8. Lahiri, 30.
9. Ibid, 35-9
10. Ibid, 61-7
11. Ibid, 68-71
12. See Chapter XIV
13. Lahiri, 105-22
14. The hollowness of the charges against Purandar Singh has been demonstrated by Lahiri (pp. 160 ff)
15 As regards this usual British plea for annexing a country, it is sufficient to point out that after the deposition of Purandar Singh several petitions were presented to Mr. White by the people of Upper Assam praying for his restoration. According to Mr White these petitions correctly expressed the feelings of the upper and middle classes of the community, but Mr Jenkins thought otherwise (Lahiri, 191).
16. Lahiri, 183.
17 This point has been fully discussed by Lahiri (105 ff)
18 See p. 100.
19. See p 131
20. Political Consultations, 1832, April 9, No. 44 (Lahiri, 136).
21 Political Consultations, 1832, April 9, No. 56 (Lahiri, 137)
21a *PIHRC*, XIX. 124.
22. Lahiri, 212-15.
22a. A similar suggestion was made by Jenkins in April, 1832 (*PIHRC*, XXX 25).
23. Lahiri, 149.
24 Ibid, 157-8.
25 Ibid, 158.
26. Ibid, 100-4.
27. Ibid, 208-11.
28 Ibid, 199-207.

CHAPTER VI

SATARA

It has been related above how the growing power of the Peshwas cast into shade that of the descendants of Shivaji. The latter bore the proud title of Chhatrapati and ruled in name over the whole empire from their capital city Sātara. But after the death of Shahu I in 1749, they gradually sank into insignificance. At the beginning of the nineteenth century they were "reduced to the position of a prisoner in the hands of the Peshwa, being securely guarded in the fort of Sātārā "[1] On the death of Shahu II in A.D. 1808 Pratap Singh succeeded him, but he and his family chafed at the irksome restraint put upon them by the Peshwa Baji Rao II. Things came to such a pass that Pratap Singh and his mother made secret overtures to the British Resident at Poona. Baji Rao came to know of this and removed Pratap Singh and his family to the fort of Wasota.[2]

Even in the state of degradation to which he was reduced Chhatrapati Pratap Singh still bore a proud name and symbolised a past glory, which carried great weight in politics. That this was fully realised by both Baji Rao and the British seems to be evident from the actions of both, though full and authentic details of these are lacking. As soon as war broke out between them Baji Rao took good care to secure the person of Pratap Singh. After his defeat at the battle of Kirkee, Baji Rao fled to Mahuli, and immediately sent Naro Apte to fetch Pratap Singh and his family from the fort of Wasota. They joined him at Pandharpur on December 14, and since then were forced to follow the Peshwa from place to place during his flight They were at Ashta, where Bapu Gokhale, the ablest and most faithful commander of Baji Rao, was defeated and killed after a severe engagement on February 19, 1818. There Pratap Singh and his family fell into the hands of the British.

The version of Pratap Singh about his relations with the British is contained in an interesting document, known as *"Historical Sketch"*, written by Balla Sahib Chitnees, a faithful servant of Pratap Singh. This document was translated into English by Dr. John Milne, M.D., late President of the Medical Board, Bombay, and forwarded by him to the Government of India on January 15, 1838.[3]

According to this document, its author, Balla Sahib Chitnees, carried on negotiations with the British Government on behalf of Raja Pratap Singh long before hostilities broke out with Baji Rao. It was represented by him that the Peshwa was only a servant of the Raja, and was in wrongful possession of his ancestral dominions which rightly belonged to him. The Raja therefore requested the British authority to restore those dominions to him. The British authorities agreed to consider this favourably after the termination of their hostilities with the Peshwa.

The Raja was encouraged by this friendly assurance. Baji Rao, on the eve of his war with the British, requested the Raja to join him and promised that after the English were defeated, the Government would belong to His Highness. This was secretly conveyed to Poona through Chitnees, and Elphinstone, the British Resident, told him "His Highness is the owner of the Government, which will of course revert to him; and you satisfy him on this point."[3a]

Henceforth the Raja continued his secret communications with the British. It was represented to Baji Rao II that the people believed that the 'Raja had gone to the side of the English, and it was therefore necessary that he should join us in the battlefield, so that the presence of the "sovereign of the kingdom" might inspire confidence in the people and army.' Accordingly Baji Rao brought the Raja and kept him in his company during his flight. After the reverses of Baji Rao, prominent Sirdars requested the Raja to take their leadership as Baji Rao was incompetent. Baji Rao also requested the Raja to equip an army and fight against the English. But the Raja, in view of his alliance with the English, evaded the request on various pretexts.

Mr. Elphinstone also visited Sātārā and asked the old councillors of the Raja to inform him that he must come and join the British army. "Then Baji Rao will be unable to contend with us, but will fly as an insurgent, and afterwards the Maharaj will be restored to his empire."[4]

While the battle was being fought at Astwalkee (Ashti) near Pandharpur, Baji Rao sent some men to escort the Maharaja and his family to the battlefield. While proceeding with them the party was attacked by the British cavalry, and a ball struck his Highness's stirrup. Chitnees then jumped from his horse, ran towards the British army and told them of the Maharaja. General Smith, commanding the British force, honourably received the Maharaja and told him: "Baji Rao is now an insurgent; the whole of the empire will follow the Maharaj, now there is no apprehension or doubt; the throne is with the Maharaj "[5] Shortly after this Mr. Billamore also spoke

in the same strain, that "this vast empire is the possession of Maharaja and by this means the Maharaja began to receive Nuzrana from every village according to former rule." General Smith, a few days later, came to Higingaum and held a ceremony in the presence of his officers, to display the banner of the Maharaja. Guns were fired and Smith addressed the audience in English, and his speech was translated in vernacular. "His Highness", he said, "is the owner of the empire. His Highness will go to Sātārā, sit on the throne and administer the government."[6]

A week later (26th January, 1818) Mr. Elphinstone arrived at Belser and paid a visit to His Highness. The latter referred to the stipulations executed through the hands of Chitnees and said: "He has a confidential promise from you which I hope you will abide by, according to the law. I have every confidence in you, and on this account I left everyone, and everything, and became confederated with you. Now, you should keep your promise." In reply Elphinstone assured him and said that "a proclamation is prepared." This was afterwards read and found satisfactory.[7]

After narrating some incidents that happened on 9th and 14th of *Falgun*, reference is made to a visit of Captain Grant on 3rd *Falgun*. Grant told His Highness that it was in the mind of Mr. Elphinstone, after the conquest of the forts of Keljia and Kumal Gur (Kamalgarh), to place the following countries under his authority, that is, "from the Western Ghats (called Syadry) to this side of the river Nira, towards the bank of the river Bhima, and thence towards the junction of the rivers Krishna and Bhima." He pointed out the risk of giving all the forts into the possession of His Highness as the dispute was not yet settled. "Therefore", he said, "we will maintain the defence of all the forts and raise the neshan (flag) of His Highness." To this His Highness replied: "You speak now beyond former agreement", and requested him to refer the matter to the Governor-General.

The circumstantial narrative, in the shape of a *"Historical Sketch"*, of which a brief summary is given above, undoubtedly charges the British Government with a flagrant breach of faith in respect to Raja Pratap Singh of Sātārā. But it does not stand alone. A statement drawn up by Mr. De Woolmar on behalf of the Raja, and printed among the Parliamentary papers, reiterates the same charges. It says that placing entire confidence in the solemn assurances of Elphinstone, the Raja threw in his lot with the British and dismissed Baji Rao, whereupon "I received new assurances, in the name of the Governor-General, that my kingdom should be preserved intact and undiminished to me." "But not one of those enticing

promises was fulfilled......a treaty of a most humiliating nature forced upon me....and I was obliged to content myself with a small portion of my once powerful kingdom."[8] Other official letters of the Raja also refer to different episodes contained in the *Historical Sketch.*

There is thus no doubt that Raja Pratap Singh, who ultimately received a small territory, roughly corresponding to the present district of Sātārā, felt himself duped and the victim of a foul conspiracy hatched by the British to serve their own interest. It is, however, a difficult matter to decide how far we can accept his version of his secret negotiation with the British, and his claims of contributing to their success against Baji Rao. For the *Historical Sketch* and the Raja's letter refer only to promises or verbal assurances, which cannot be checked by any documentary evidence. Even without going so far as to attribute to the Raja a deliberate concoction of fact it is permissible to hold that there might have been a real misunderstanding on his part and that he read more in the letters or promises than they actually contained.

The main contention of the Raja is, however, supported, at least partially, from certain official papers. There is, for example, a letter, written by Sir Thomas Munro to Elphinstone, dated 29th March, 1818, which says, with reference to the Raja: "The limits of his principality be left undefined for the present. He should be required to summon Baji Rao (the Peshwa) and his principal chiefs to his presence, and in case of their not obeying, to proclaim Baji Rao and all who adhered to him rebels."[9] This was evidently the genesis of the proclamation issued by the Raja on April 14, 1818, in which he declares that "on account of the misconduct of Baji Rao..... his administration of the affairs of the Empire is put an end to" and "commands all the people not to assist the Peshwa or keep any communication with him in any way."[10]

Still more important is a letter from Mr. Elphinstone to the Raja, dated 13th September, 1818. It shows that the Raja, being anxious "for the settlement of the kingdom", had an interview with Elphinstone in which the latter assured the former that the matter had been submitted to the Governor-General. In the present letter, which is a reply to further inquiry on the subject by the Raja, Elphinstone informs him that he (Elphinstone) had "not yet been favoured with a reply from the Governor-General."[11] This correspondence certainly indicates that the Raja had some previous understanding with Elphinstone. The proclamation of Elphinstone which, according to the *Historical Sketch*, was shown to the Raja

and satisfied him, is obviously the well-known one issued before the termination of the war. It contains the following:—

"In a short period nothing will remain connected with Baji Rao and measures will be adopted for the enlargement of the Raja of Sātārā, who will be established in a principality for the maintenance of his own rank and dignity and of those of his courts."

There is therefore no doubt that there was a previous assurance to the Raja of Sātārā, as narrated in the *Historical Sketch*, though it is uncertain whether Elphinstone held out the hope of restoring to him the whole of Peshwa's dominions. The proclamation of Elphinstone keeps the point vague, but a perusal of his letters and minutes shows that his intention was to treat the kingdoms of Peshwa and Appa Saheb (Nagpur) more or less on the same lines as was done at Mysore. The cases were on all fours, and the position of Baji Rao *vis à vis* Pratap Singh offers a close parallel to that of Haidar Ali and the Raja of Mysore. The latter was restored to Haidar's dominion after portions were taken away. Now, the following expression of Elphinstone, when studied in this background, acquires a new significance.

"We never before attempted the complete conquest of a country. Even Mysore was saved by the creation of a Raja. Now we are doing it at Poona and Nagpur."[12]

It is interesting to note that the policy recommended by Elphinstone was actually followed in the case of Nagpur. It is not, therefore, unlikely that guided by some such idea, and appreciating the value of services which the Raja could render by openly espousing the cause of the British, he might have held out to Pratap Singh the hope of a restoration of his kingdom. But, as is well known, the Governor-General decided upon the annexation of the Peshwa's dominions. It is not necessary to suppose that Elphinstone played a deliberate trick upon the Raja and deceived him; nor that the Raja fabricated the whole story to make a false case in his favour. The statement of the Raja that the whole of his ancestral territories were promised to him seems to be an exaggerated one. Perhaps there was a talk in general terms, and each put his own interpretation upon the extent of the territorial cession; but that it was certainly intended to cover a great deal more than what was included in the petty kingdom of Sātārā, afterwards granted to the Raja, hardly admits of any doubt.

Reference may be made to a few additional facts which are not without some bearing on the point at issue. That the Raja rendered distinct service to the British, and that the situation would have

been very difficult for them if the Raja had joined Baji Rao instead of the British, was freely admitted by many British officials, both civil and military.[13]

Secondly, when the *"Historical Sketch"*, containing the Raja's version of the case, was translated and forwarded to the Government of India by Dr. Milne, Elphinstone was still alive, and it is difficult to believe that such serious allegations of breach of faith on his part was not brought to his notice. Yet we find no categorical refutation of it either by him or by Sir Robert Grant who summarised the *"Historical Sketch"* and wrote a minute upon it on May 31, 1838. Grant merely pays a high tribute to the honour of Elphinstone and adds that he does not conceive it necessary to offer any reply to the accusation contained in the "Historical Sketch" and repeated in "the important state document" prepared by the Raja.[14] Of course the absence of refutation is not tantamount to an admission. But the fact remains that very categorical and serious allegations against one of the highest British officials were made by a distinguished scion of a noble family and the ruler of a State in public documents, placed before the Government of India, and yet they were simply ignored.

It has been necessary to discuss this episode at some length, for historians have generally ignored it altogether. Grant Duff, who actually administered the State of Sātārā on behalf of the Raja since 1818, and was undoubtedly conversant with the whole affair, merely hints at it in the following words in his classical *"History of the Mahrattas."*

"His (Raja's) whole family entertained the most extravagant ideas of their own consequence, and their expectations were proportionate; so that for a time the bounty which they experienced was not duly appreciated."[15]

Grant Duff does not make the least reference to the advantages reaped by the British by the adherence of the Raja to their cause, but, perhaps inadvertently, blurts out the truth when, with reference to the battle at Ashti, he observes: "but the most important result was the capture of the Raja of Sātārā with his mother and brothers, who on this occasion, to their great joy, were rescued from the power of Baji Rao."[16] For it may well be asked that if the British did not derive any benefit from the Raja, wherein lay the importance of his capture from their point of view.

Whatever may be the amount of truth contained in the *Historical Sketch*, there is no doubt that the Raja regarded himself to be duped when he had to be satisfied with the petty principality of Sātārā, which roughly corresponded to the present Sātārā District

with a portion of Sholāpur district as far as Pandharpur in the east, with some *jāgīrs*, yielding a total revenue of about 20 lakhs of Rupees. It can well be imagined that he cherished no friendly feelings towards the British who, he felt, had betrayed him. Nevertheless he was an intelligent man and resigned himself to his fate.

In the light of later views and events, it is necessary to note that the conduct and personality of the Raja were highly spoken of by the British officials. Elphinstone, Governor of Bombay, described him as a good fellow in 1822. In 1826 he wrote: "He is the most civilised Mahratta I ever met with, has his country in excellent order, and everything, to his roads and aqueducts, in a style that would do credit to a European."[17] General Robertson, who was for many years Resident at Sātārā, and became later a Director of the East India Company, declared in a meeting of the Company that "he had never met with a man, Englishman or Native, of more scrupulous veracity and stricter integrity than the Raja."[18] His reputation brought him a recognition from the Court of Directors itself. In a letter, dated December 29, 1835, that august body paid high compliments to the Raja for the "exemplary fulfilment." of his duties, and in recognition thereof presented to him a jewelled sword, "as a token of their high esteem and regard."[19]

The letter and the present were naturally sent through the Government of Bombay. But, curiously enough, the Bombay Government did not forward to the Raja either the letter or the present. This inexplicable conduct was the result of a deep-rooted animosity, which the new Governor of Bombay, Sir Robert Grant, entertained towards the Raja. As this proved to be the undoing of the latter it is necessary to trace the causes of the growing dissension between the two.

The treaty of 1819, by which the principality of Sātārā was created, contained a schedule of six *jāgīrs*, the holders of which were claimed by the Raja to be under his sovereignty. The Bombay Government did not accept this view, but Lord Clare, the Governor, referred the matter to the Court of Directors who admitted the claim of the Raja. But this decision reached India after he was succeeded by Grant, and was not communicated to the Raja. In an interview with the new Governor, when he was at the Hills in May, 1835, Raja Pratap Singh brought forward his claim to the six *jāgīrs* based on the treaty of 1819. Grant promised to submit the question to the Court of Directors, but his displeasure was shown by his omission to pay a return visit to the Raja as every previous Governor had done. Next year, the Raja again interviewed the Governor and gathered that the promised report to the Court of Direc-

tors was not yet sent. The Raja invited the Governor to Sātārā, only 30 miles distant, but the invitation was declined.

Thereupon the Raja decided to bring the question of the *jāgīr* as well as the treatment he had received to the notice of the Court of Directors through an agent of his own. This naturally alarmed Grant. He had deliberately withheld from the Raja not only the letter of the Court of Directors dated 29th December, 1835, and the sword presented to him, but also the decision of the Court of Directors regarding the *jāgirs*. What was worse, he prevaricated with the Raja in respect to his claim over the six *jāgirs*.

Such an extraordinary conduct on the part of a responsible official like the Governor of Bombay requires an explanation. In the absence of anything definite, the following circumstances might afford a satisfactory explanation for the displeasure of the Bombay Government.

In the first place, the new imperialistic and aggressive policy of the British officials in India could ill brook the existence of Sātārā as a separate State. This is best illustrated by a minute written by Sir Robert Grant on January 30, 1837. Citing arguments which would justify the annexation of Sātārā as a penalty for the conduct of the Raja, he wrote:

"Nor do I doubt that, in view of the many, if not of most politicians, reasons of policy will appear to justify a resort to that extreme measure. An opinion is now very commonly entertained that the erection of Satara into a separate principality was a mistaken proceeding. It is at least clear that this principality includes the finest part of the Deccan, and by its position most awkwardly breaks the continuty of the British territory. There are those, therefore, who will hail the present crisis as affording an excellent opportunity of repairing the error alluded to, by pulling down the inconvenient pageant we have erected."[20]

Secondly, Raja Pratap Singh was a high-spirited noble soul who would not tamely submit to the British officials like the other rulers of native States. Even in his darkest days, he could not forget that he was a descendant of Shivaji. According to the "*Historical Sketch*", mentioned above, he objected to that passage in Elphinstone's proclamation "which stated that His Highness has been liberated from his confinement imposed by the Peshwa, and has been crowned." He observed "that he had been crowned for a long time; *it is* not that he is to be re-instated upon the throne, but that he himself had joined the cause of the English authority." He acutely felt the indignity implied in Sir Robert Grant's not paying him the customary return visit. Instead of meekly submitting to the dictates

of the Bombay Government, as most native rulers would have done, he had the courage (audacity, in official parlance) to openly defy them in a constitutional manner, by bringing his case to the notice of the Court of Directors.

The British officials in India now followed the policy of Tarquinius Superbus. As an Under-Secretary of State for India candidly told the House of Commons, the Government of India had never encouraged men of ability, good character, and popularity as exercising any authority in a native State. They had always hated and discouraged independent and original talent, and had always loved and promoted docile and unpretending mediocrity.[21] The same policy, which removed the vigorous and active Wazir Ali from the throne of Avadh (Oudh) in favour of the subservient Sadat Ali, was now operating against Pratap Singh in favour of his worthless brother Appa Sahib.

Thirdly, Raja Pratap Singh irritated the Brahmans by supporting the claims of Prabhu Kāyasthas to perform those religious rites which were claimed by the former to be their exclusive privilege. He also regarded his own family, to which Shivaji belonged, as Kshatriyas, though most of the Brahmans of the Deccan regarded them as Sudras. All this highly offended the Brahmans who had wielded great authority and influence in Maharashtra since the days of the Brahman Peshwas, and many of whom held high positions, even during the British regime. Once they came to know of the disaffection of the Bombay Government towards Pratap Singh, they found in the former a good instrument for encompassing the ruin of the latter. One of the chief conspirators against the Raja was Balaji Pant Natoo. He was an unscrupulous intriguer who had encompassed the ruin of Baji Rao and, as an agent of Elphinstone, knew all about the negotiations between him and the Raja. As a reward for his faithful services to the British, Natoo was granted a *jāgīr*, and he became the first Assistant of the Resident, Captain Grant Duff, who managed the administration of Sātārā. When the Raja was placed in power, Natoo expected to be the Dewan, but the Raja did not agree. Since then Natoo lived in Poona, and was held in high favour and esteem by all English officers under whom he had been employed. General John Briggs, who had been Resident at Sātārā for several years, wrote about him as follows:

"But when it became known that the Raja was in trouble with the Bombay Government, and had incurred the serious displeasure of our authorities in 1835, Balaji Pant Natoo, in concert with the Raja's brother, who was on bad terms with him, and who was put in his place after the deposition in 1839, saw his opportunity had come

and commenced the calumnies and intrigues which ultimately proved successful."[22]

Whatever we might think of these causes as influencing the Bombay Government in adopting a definitely hostile attitude against the Raja, the fact remains that, by the middle of 1836, the Bombay Government found itself in a tight corner by the decision of the Raja to send his agent to the Court of Directors. For such a course of action on his part was sure to expose the iniquities of the Governor of Bombay in withholding from the Raja the letter, the present, and the decision in his favour about the *jāgīrs* by the Court of Directors. It must be a strange coincidence indeed that it was just at this critical moment that the first accusation was made against the Raja. Colonel Lodwick, Resident at Sātārā, wrote to the Bombay Government on June 20, 1836, that the Raja intended to send a *vakil* to Calcutta or England for the settlement of certain disputed points and asked for instructions. What instructions he received is not known, but may be inferred from the fact that on July 22, he wrote another letter accusing two persons in the confidence of the Raja of having attempted to seduce some Indian officers of the British Regiment stationed at Sātārā from their allegiance to the British Government. An urgent reply was sent on July 24, and other correspondence followed. On September 15, 1836, before the Raja was told anything about the grave accusation against him, the Government of Bombay wrote to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors "of a conspiracy existing at Sātārā, and, as is alleged, at several other native courts in India, to seduce our native troops from their allegiance, with the ultimate design, by a combined effort, to subvert the British empire in India " They added that information obtained through two native officers "scarcely leaves a doubt that His Highness the Raja of Satara has proved faithless to his engagements with the British Government, and that he is at this moment in league with other powers to subvert our authority in this country."[23] After thus pronouncing a definite verdict against the Raja, the Bombay Government appointed a special and secret Commission to investigate into the truth of the charges against him. It consisted of the Resident at Sātārā, the Secretary of the Bombay Government, and Lieut-Colonel Ovans. The first two were virtually the accusers, and the unscrupulous character of the third will be shown later. The inquiry was a mere farce. It was based on the uncorroborated evidence of some native officers who, under orders of their officer Lieutenant Stock, pretended to join the conspiracy and, as such, regularly visited the other conspirators in order to elicit further information and convey them to the British officer.

The two alleged conspirators, on behalf of the Raja, were surrendered by him to the Resident within an hour of the fact being intimated to him. But neither they nor the Raja were allowed to confront the accusers, personally or even through an agent, and the Raja was not supplied either with the charge-sheet or a copy of the depositions against him. Yet the Commissioners reported that the Raja had "altogether failed to disprove the evidence that had been brought forward."[24] Colonel Lodwick confessed some years later "that the witnesses examined before the Commission bore false testimony" and "deeply regretted the part he played to the latest hour of his life." He also disclosed in a letter written to the Court of Directors in 1840, how he was egged on by the Governor of Bombay to decoy and entrap the Raja in a plot against the British Government, but due to a sense of "honour and honesty" he "spurned such shifts as these."[25] For this, or some other reason, Lodwick was removed and succeeded by Col. Ovans, the third member of the iniquitous Commission, as Resident at Sātārā on June 15, 1837. In a letter, dated 13th June, 1837, the attention of the New Resident was drawn to a letter, which "contains information of the most important nature connected with the designs of His Highness the Raja against the British Government." The writer of this letter was the mother of Govind Rao Dewan, a favourite of the Raja, who was alleged to have attempted to seduce the allegiance of the native officers and was for that offence kept in close confinement, but was at that time a state pensioner at Poona. It is interesting to note how a British pension induced his family to turn against his king and master. An interesting point is that this letter, dated 13th December, 1836, was not received till 6th March, 1837, and then, instead of referring it to the then Resident, Lodwick, the Government of Bombay waited more than two months till Ovans took over charge. The latter entered into the task of collecting evidence against the Raja with great assiduity and liberally paid persons for that purpose. He succeeded in bringing two additional charges against the Raja namely, (1) that he had conspired with the Portuguese Viceroy of Goa for the overthrow of the British Government of India, and (2) that he had also intrigued with the ex-Raja of Nagpur and tried to call in the aid of the Russians and the Turks for the expulsion of the English from India. He even got hold of a bundle of documents secreted in Portuguese territories in support of the first charge, but the Portuguese Governor of Goa declared that "the papers alleged to have been written by him were foul forgeries and that he never in life held any political correspondence with the Raja of Satara. Official report from the Court of Native States con-

cerned disproved the charge that the Raja had been carrying on intrigues with them against the British."[26]

In a final effort to get justice the Raja sent agents to Bombay and England to plead his cause.[27] Col. Ovans had evidently overshot his mark. Some high-souled Englishmen in Bombay, being convinced of the Raja's innocence and regarding him as the victim of a foul conspiracy, took up his cause. The Governor-General in Council wrote to the Government of Bombay on October 2, 1837, that they saw "little or nothing in the evidence recorded to inculpate the Raja".[28] This was a severe indictment against the Government of Bombay; so, in a minute recorded on October 30, 1837, Sir Robert Grant expressed his surprise and regret at the letter of the Government of India, and refused to give effect to it, as thereby "the credit of the British Government will be seriously impaired."[29] In the meanwhile the Secretary to the Government of India again addressed a letter to the Bombay Government on October 16, 1837, strongly condemning the proceedings adopted by the Governor-in-Council, and reiterated the view "that this perplexed and protracted scrutiny should be at once brought to a conclusion."[30] A copy of this letter was forwarded to the Resident at Sātārā with instructions to bring inquiries already commenced to an early conclusion, and to abstain from further inquiries of a collateral nature.

The Court of Directors, too, adopted a reasonable attitude. In a letter dated 7th February, 1838, long after proceedings had been instituted against the Raja, they again recognised the claim of the Raja over the disputed *jāgīrs* and viewed with disapprobation "marks of negligence on the part of the Bombay Government" (presumably) in withholding the letter and the sword presented to the Raja and not giving effect to their earlier order about the *jāgīrs*. As late as January, 1839, they wrote: "We have no hesitation in giving it as our decided opinion that it would be not only a waste of time, but seriously detrimental to the character of our Government to carry on any further inquiry in the matter."[31]

Everything now looked auspicious for the Raja. Sir Robert Grant, the Governor of Bombay, was succeeded by Sir James Carnac, who, in his capacity as Chairman of the Court of Directors, wrote the letter of February 7, 1838, and obviously took a sympathetic view of the Raja. The Court of Directors made no secret of their desire that Sir James would restore the goodwill and friendship between the Raja of Sātārā and the British Government. Mr. John Forbes, a Director of the East India Company, recorded in his minute of dissent on April 8, 1840, that the "universal impression at the India House was that the new Governor was empowered not only to sup-

press all further enquiry, but to consign the entire question to complete oblivion."

But this was not to be. Sir James visited Sātārā towards the end of August, 1839, and had three interviews with the Raja. He handed over a memorandum to the Raja for his signature. It began with a preamble that the British Government was satisfied, after inquiry, that the Raja was guilty of treason, as he "entered into communications hostile to the British Government," and had therefore no claim on their "alliance and protection." Nevertheless the British Government had decided to condone his faults on certain conditions. The conditions are then specified in the memorandum. These are based on the assumption of Raja's guilt in the past, and a hope is expressed that he would duly appreciate the clemency of the British and would in future strictly observe the articles of treaty and scrupulously maintain friendship with the British.

Those who knew the Raja could reasonably expect that, proud and sensitive as he was, he would refuse to sign away his honour by subscribing to the preamble and thereby admitting his own guilt which he had so long stoutly denied. It may be that the preamble was deliberately designed to achieve this very end. In any case the Raja refused to sign the memorandum. He was dethroned on September 5, 1839, and deported to Banaras, where he died in A.D. 1847.

The dignified attitude of the Raja towards the proposal of Sir James is best told in his own words.

"During the progress of my interviews with the Governor and the Resident....I was distinctly informed that the consequence of my refusal to agree with the terms proposed would be the forfeiture of my throne. I could not, however, consent to retain my sovereignty at the expense of my honour. Convinced of my innocence, and of my ability to demonstrate that innocence before any equitable tribunal, I could not agree to terms based upon the assumption of my guilt, and by so doing make myself a party to my own degradation."

This is an extract from a letter which the Raja wrote from Banaras to Sir Henry Hardinge, the Governor-General, on December 12, 1844.[32] In the same letter the Raja very rightly pointed out that if he were really guilty, he would have welcomed the opportunity to retain the throne by a tacit admission of his guilt. Finally he asked, "whether such a man as I am described to be in the papers now printed would have hesitated to obtain an oblivion of the past, and favour and friendship with the British Government for the future, on such terms as those which I inflexibly rejected?" Like a worthy descendant of Shivaji, Raja Pratap Singh exclaimed: "I have lost my

throne, my name, my property, all, but the inward consciousness of my innocence and my rectitude .... because I would not, at the sacrifice of my conscience, declare myself to be what my enemies had represented me; because, instead of accepting mercy, I demanded justice."

It is difficult to account for the attitude of Sir James Carnac, in insisting upon the Raja's admission of his own guilt, when both the Government of India and the Court of Directors agreed to let bygones be bygones, as mentioned above. But those who are familiar with the inner working of the British bureaucracy will not feel surprised that even the best intentions of a Governor (or Governor-General, to wit, Lord Ripon), backed by the Court of Directors, may be thwarted by the die-hard British bureaucrats to save, what they believe to be, their honour and prestige. This alone can satisfactorily explain what actually happened. For it is at least better and more reasonable than the other alternative supposition, that Sir James was bought over by the enemies of the Raja.[33]

The authorities in England took the dethronement of the Raja as a *fait accompli* and trusted the man on the spot.[34] But there were many Englishmen, both official and non-official, who were convinced of the innocence of the Raja and did not hesitate to express their views. The activities of the Raja's agents in England, particularly Rango Bapuji, gave great publicity to the whole affair, and Mr. G. Thompson exposed the whole iniquity in his eloquent addresses to the Court of Proprietors in London. He even moved a formal resolution "that Lt. Colonel Ovans had been guilty of conduct unworthy of the character of a British Officer". He even forced the authorities in England to publish secret correspondence which was not included in the Sātārā Papers laid before the Parliament. In particular he brought to light a letter from Major Carpenter, who was in charge of the prisoner Raja of Sātārā at Banaras, which created great sensation. It appears that though Lord Hardinge did not forward to the Court of Directors the letter of the Raja, dated December 12, 1844, from which copious extracts have been quoted above, till December, 1847, after the Raja's death, negotiations were opened with the Raja by Carpenter, who offered the Raja an increased allowance on condition that he would withdraw his agent in London, and discontinue the agitation of his case in England. The Raja refused, saying that he was a king, and not a *mahājan, saukar*, a Babu, or a Zamindar.

When this was revealed by Thompson for the first time, in a speech before the Court of Proprietors, Carpenter was asked for an explanation. He admitted the substantial correctness of the statement

of Thompson and then added: "I carefully studied the whole of the voluminous documents connected with his (Raja's) case, and the result was a belief in his innocence, and this belief has been confirmed beyond a doubt by subsequent disclosures." For this frank admission Major Carpenter was severely reprimanded by the Governor-General whose Secretary wrote to him that his "conviction of the ex-Raja's innocence of the charges of which he was convicted, and of his (Raja's) ability to prove his innocence, is as unbecoming as it is uncalled for."[35]

Carpenter's offer was presumably inspired by higher quarters, though it cannot be definitely proved. In any case, the agitation in England proved highly damaging not only to the East India Company, but also to the character and reputation of the British nation. But nothing availed. To quote Birkenhead, 'the dogs barked, but the caravan went on'. Today, no one would possibly deny that the Raja of Sātārā fell a victim to the bureaucratic vindictiveness, a familiar characteristic of British rule in India.[36] But though the details of the transaction, from beginning to end, present unusually sordid features, Raja Pratap Singh of Sātārā was neither the first nor the last to lose a kingdom because of the dislike of the British officials who could not tolerate a capable man on the throne in a native State. They were true to their tradition when they successfully manoeuvred to replace a high-souled and spirited ruler like Pratap Singh by a worthless creature like Appa Sahib, about whom Grant Duff wrote in his official report in 1819: "He is an obstinate ill-disposed lad, with very low vicious habits." In May, 1833, we find the following in the *Asiatic Journal:* "The Bombay papers, English and native, contain long accounts of the intercourse between the Earl of Clare (Governor of Bombay) and the Rajah of Satara (Pratap Singh)"...."His people", it is added, "are happy and contented, and enjoy peace and security, they love their sovereign, and speak highly of him. Appa Sahib, his brother,...is not held in high estimation. He will probably be heir to the throne; so at least people fear, for he has few qualities to fit him for governing any people."[37] After all these, there is no wonder that the sun-dried bureaucrats would miss no opportunity of pushing Pratap Singh from the throne and putting Appa Sahib in his place. It is this bureaucratic mentality that proved to be the ruin of Pratap Singh, and evidence is not altogether wanting that Appa Sahib was used as an instrument in deposing his brother. The whole episode constitutes one of the blackest chapters in the history of British rule in India.

1. Sardesai, S. G.—*New History of the Marathas*, III. 503.
2. Ibid, 487, 506.
3. Major B. D. Basu,—*Story of Satara* (Calcutta, 1922), pp. 347 ff. The text of the document is given on pp. 352 ff.

3. Basu, op. cit. 358-9.
4. Ibid, 361.
5. Ibid, 365.
6. Ibid, 366-7.
7. Ibid, 368-9.
8. Ibid, 10.
9. Gleig, *Life of Munro*, III. 237.
10. Basu, op. cit. 25 f.n.
11. Ibid, 24 f.n.
12. Sardesai, op. cit. 506-7. Colebrooke, *Life of Elphinstone*, II. 40-44.
13. Basu, op. cit. 17 ff.
14. Ibid, 13.
15. James Grant Duff, *A History of the Mahrattas* (Caucutta, 1912), III. 483.
16. Ibid 445 A few lines later Duff observes "The affair of Ashtah, trifling as it was, had a very material effect in hastening the termination of the war". Here, again, the only possible reference is to the possession of the person of the Raja.
17. Basu, op. cit. 46-7.
18. Ibid, 48.
19. Ibid, 48-9.
20. Ibid, 109
21. Sir Henry Cotton, *Indian and Home Memories*, 253-4
22. Basu, op cit 61-2,. the long statement from which the extract is quoted is reproduced by Basu and is worth reading
23. Ibid, 68-9
24. Ibid, 79 The iniquitous manner in which the Commissioners conducted their proceedings, and a brief statement of the whole case against the Raja will be found on pp 70 ff.
25. Ibid, 82
26. Basu, op cit 95 Referring to the charges against Raja Pratap Singh, Arnold remarks "Nothing could be weaker than the indictments against him The witnesses against the Raja plainly and cumbrously perjured themselves, the Viceroy of Goa disowned the plot and declared the letters exhibited to be forgeries Moodhajee Bhonslay of Nagpore was living upon alms at the time in a small courtyard at Goudpore, and could hardly furnish, therefore, the 25,000 lacs said to have been arranged for as the price of treason" (Arnold, II 111) Lodwick himself, as noted above, strongly condemned the perjured evidence against the Raja (Basu, op cit 94)
27. For a detailed account of the Raja's agents in London, cf Basu, op cit 99 ff
28. Ibid, 116
29. Ibid, 117
30. Ibid, 118
31. Ibid, 124
32. Ibid, 128-30, 151-2
33. With reference to Carnac, John Forbes observes as follows in his minute of dissent. "The new Governor, on his landing, fell under evil influence; poison was poured into his ear by some insidious adviser; the idea of conditional pardon took the place of perfect oblivion, and the Raja, under circumstances in which his personal dignity appears to have been little consulted, was required to return to the confidence of the British Government, on terms which the sequel will show to have been equally harsh, uncalled for, and unwise" (Basu, op. cit, p 126, f n.).
34. Hobhouse, the President of the Board of Control, disbelieved the principal charge against the Raja, but declared that he would never allow the Raja to sit on the Guddee again; that he would support the Government of India, right or wrong (Arnold, II. 112).
35. Basu, op. cit., 153-6.
36. To Major B. D. Basu belongs the credit of revealing it with full documentary evidence (Basu, op. cit). As a specimen of the views of British historians, reference may be made to the *Oxford History of India* (1919), p. 674. Thompson and Garratt refer to Basu's book as "cantankerous", but admits that his version is "amply in accord with contemporary British testimony" Nevertheless the authors hold that the Raja was possibly guilty, and might even have conspired with the Portuguese, as the Governor of Bombay, Sir Robert Grant, coveted the territories of both for inclusion within the British dominions,—"statesmanlike plans" according to these authors. *THG* (354-356).
37. Basu, op. cit., 133-4.

CHAPTER VII

FIRST AFGHAN WAR

1. *British attitude towards Russia.*

At the beginning of the period under review, both Sindh and the Panjāb were independent principalities. The river Sutlej, which formed the boundary between British India and the Panjāb, offered no natural obstacle to the advance of an enemy. Beyond that line was the domain of Ranjit Singh, a powerful potentate, known for his political ambition and unscrupulous politics. He was thwarted by the British in his ambition to spread his power to the east of the Sutlej, and to the south in Sindh, and, though outwardly a loyal friend, bound by treaty obligations, could not be relied upon to sacrifice his real interest to his sense of loyalty or friendship for the British. The Talpur Baluchi Chiefs, who partitioned Sindh among themselves, were turbulent, ferocious, and warlike, and were not amenable to any permanent political understanding on which any reliance could be placed. These two powers, separate or even united, might not prove a serious menace to the security of British India, but they could easily play very handy tools in the hands of a powerful foreign enemy who might choose to use them deliberately in an aggressive design against India.

The British statesmen in the second quarter of the nineteenth century looked upon Russia as such an enemy, and the rapid advance of Russia towards Central Asia in the east, and Persia in the south, caused grave apprehension in their minds. Their fear was not altogether unfounded. During the period when the British were consolidating their authority in India, Russia had grown from a small principality into a vast empire. She had wrested large slices of territory from Sweden, Poland, Turkey (in Europe and Asia), Persia, and Central Asia, and it has been estimated that the territory she acquired between 1772 and 1836 was greater in extent and importance than the whole empire she had in Europe before that time. During the same period she "stretched herself forward about one thousand miles towards India and the same distance towards the capital of Persia." It was calculated "that the battalions of the Russian imperial guard that invaded Persia found, at the termination of the war, that they were as near to Herat as to the banks of the Don, that they had already accomplished half the distance from their capital to Delhi". As a matter of fact the Persian Government was

now completely under the influence of Russia, and "*The Moscow Gazette*", it was alleged, "threatens to dictate at Calcutta the next peace with England."[1]

It was believed by a large section of the British public that Russia had definite designs against India. Dr. John McNeill, a medical officer attached to the British Mission in Persia, forcefully expressed this view with facts and arguments in his book "*Progress and present position of Russia in the East*, published in 1836. A number of pamphlets and articles in journals also fanned the flame of anti-Russian propaganda, with the result that "Russophobia became a leading element in British public opinion". Many public men, regarded as experts in the Far Eastern problem, contributed to this feeling by raising the cry of 'India in danger'.

It was generally believed that Russia would advance towards India through the valley of the Oxus, then occupied by the Khanates of Khiva and Bokhārā, the latter of which had a common boundary with Afghānistān. Another alternative route by which Russia could possibly advance was through Persia and Herāt. Thus both Afghānistān and Persia became objects of anxious and serious attention to the Government of India as well as the British Cabinet.

In 1835, the Whig ministry of Melbourne succeeded the ministry of Peel, and Palmerston became the Foreign Secretary. Palmerston was an ardent Russophobe and lost no time in giving public evidence of it. Lord Heytesbury was nominated by the Peel Ministry to succeed Bentinck as Governor-General of India. But Palmerston did not like the appointment, for Heytesbury, when an ambassador in Russia, was an admirer of the Tsar Nicholas. As noted above,[1a] Heytesbury's appointment was cancelled, and Lord Auckland, "a sound Whig henchman", was appointed in his place. Palmerston gave further evidence of the same policy by appointing Dr.McNeill, mentioned above, as Minister Plenipotentiary at Teheran, the Persian capital Thus the two key-posts, from which Russian advance could be observed and checked, if necessary, were filled by two officers chosen by Palmerston, and they could be relied upon to give effect to his anti-Russian policy. Before, however, tracing their activities, it is necessary to take a bird's-eye view of the position of Russia and Britain in Persia and Afghānistān.

2. *Persia and Afghānistān*

Reference has been made in the preceding volume to the dangers to the security of north-western frontier of India, apprehended by the British at the commencement of the nineteenth century, partly from the machinations of the French and partly from the growing

power of Zaman Shah, ruler of Afghānistān. To counteract both of these, Captain John Malcolm was sent as an envoy to the court of Persia in A.D. 1799. A treaty was concluded with the ruler of Persia in A.D. 1801 by which the latter agreed that should a French army attempt to establish themselves on any of the islands or shores of Persia, the two contracting parties should act in co-operation "to destroy and put an end to the foundation of their treason."[2] The treaty also provided that in case the Afghāns attempt to invade India, "the king of Persia should be bound to lay waste, with a great army, the country of the Afghāns."

Persia soon changed her policy and courted alliance with the French. But the British succeeded in breaking it up and regaining the friendship of Persia. A new treaty was concluded in 1812 and revised, with a few modifications, in 1814, by which Persia definitely abrogated her alliance with the French, agreed not to enter into any alliance with any European power in a state of hostility with Britain, or permit any European force to pass through her territories towards India, and to use her good offices with rulers of Khorasan, Tataristān, Bokhārā and Samarkhand to prevent any European power from passing through their dominions to invade India. In the event of Persia being invaded by any European power, Great Britain was to furnish a military force, or in lieu thereof a subsidy with warlike ammunitions.[3] But when Persia was engaged in a disastrous war with Russia, the British found themselves in a difficulty to carry out this provision, and annulled it in 1828 by paying Persia a sum of money which the latter badly needed in discharging the claim of Russia.

There were two articles in the treaty with Persia which related to Afghānistān. By the first Persia agreed to send an army against Afghānistān if the British were in a state of war with that country. By the second, the British undertook not to interfere in the case of war between Persia and Afghānistān, unless their mediation were solicited by both the parties.

The affairs of Afghānistān were in a distracted condition since Zaman Shah, the grandson of Ahmad Shah Abdali (or Durrani) of the famous Sadozai clan, was deposed and blinded in A.D. 1800 by his brother Mahmud Mirza with the help of the Barakzai brothers. Mahmud, in his turn, was defeated three years later by his younger brother Shuja Mirza (or Shuja-ul-mulk). But Fath Khan, the chief of the Barakzais, joined Kamran Mirza, the son of Mahmud, and stirred up rebellion. Shuja had sent his best army to Kāshmir but it was defeated, and about the same time Fath Khan and Mahmud seized Kandāhār. Shah Shuja was finally defeated

by them in 1809 and after some adventures took refuge with Ranjit Singh at Lahore. Ranjit promised to help him in recovering the throne, and took from him the famous Koh-i-nur diamond, but actually did nothing. Shah Shuja resumed his life of intrigue and adventures till he settled down at Ludhiana in 1816, under British protection. By a strange coincidence the deposed and blinded Zaman Shah was also living there as a pensioner of the British.

Though Mahmud became nominally the king, the real power was in the hands of the Barakzai chief, Fath Khan, who was helped by his able brother, Dost Muhammad, and asserted Afghān supremacy over Sindh, Baluchistān, and Kāshmir. Being deputed by his brother, Dost Muhammad, though very young, treacherously seized Herāt, which was then being ruled by Firuz-ud-din, brother of king Mahmud. In course of this he is alleged to have behaved rudely to the ladies of the harem. To avenge this insult to the royal family, or perhaps to get rid of a virtual master, Kamran, the son of Mahmud, murdered Fath Khan.

The assassination of Fath Khan was a signal for the final collapse of the ruling Sadozai clan. The Barakzai brothers rose in revolt, and though the eldest, Azim Khan, counselled moderation, Dost Muhammad seized Kābul. He had to defend himself not only against Shah Mahmud and prince Kamran, who were in possession of Herāt, but also against his own brother Azim Khan who asserted his claim as the representative of the Barakzai family. The two brothers now nominated two members of the royal family for the throne. Dost Muhammad set up Shahzada Sultan Ali, while the choice of Azim Khan fell upon Shah Shuja, the ex-ruler, now an exile at Ludhiana. Shah Shuja advanced towards Kābul, but his overbearing conduct gave so great an offence to Azim Khan, that the two quarrelled. A conflict ensued and Shah Shuja, being defeated, fled, first to Khyber hills and then to Sindh. Azim thereupon set up prince Ayub as his nominee and set out for Kābul with him.

In the meantime Shah Mahmud and Kamran, marching from Herāt, reached within six miles of Kābul. Dost Muhammad, despairing of success, prepared for flight, but at the last moment Shah Mahmud's courage failed him, and he fled back to Herāt.

The Barakzai brothers now ruled over the whole of Afghānistān, except Herāt, under the nominal sovereignty of Ayub, the puppet of Azim Khan, whose superior claim was recognised by his brothers. Sultan Ali, the nominee of Dost Muhammad, quietly passed out of the stage into insignificance. The whole country was parcelled out among the brothers, about twenty in number, with Azim Khan as the chief of Kābul and groups of his brothers ruling

at Kandāhār and Peshāwār, nominally in subordination to him. Shah Shuja made one more attempt to regain his throne and organised an army at Shikārpur. Azim Khan moved down and easily dispersed it. He then planned an invasion of the Sikh territory. But Ranjit Singh very cleverly sowed seeds of dissension among the Barakzai brothers, and one of them, Sultan Mahmud, who was ruling in Peshāwār, was won over by him. Dost Muhammad having also joined the plot, Azim Khan was forced to fall back. Ranjit Singh entered Peshāwār in triumph, but, instead of annexing it, divided the territory between Sultan Muhammad and Dost Muhammad.

Shortly afterwards, in A.D. 1823, Azim Khan died of a broken heart. His death was a signal for struggle among the Barakzai brothers to succeed to the chief power. For three years they were all fighting for themselves, but in A.D. 1826 Dost Muhammad seized Kābul and henceforth remained the supreme chief in Afghānistān. The nominal king Ayub, of the Sadozai clan, had already been made a prisoner in 1823, and ultimately found refuge in Lahore and got a pension of 1,000 Rupees per month from Ranjit Singh.

Shah Shuja made one more effort to regain his throne. He turned to the British for helping him with money, but Lord Bentinck, though sympathetic to his cause, plainly told him that such help would be inconsistent with the policy of neutrality adopted by his Government. All that he could get was four months' allowance (Rs. 16,000) paid in advance.

Nevertheless Shuja left Ludhiana in January 1833, and proceeded to Shikārpur in Sindh. On his way he concluded a treaty with Ranjit Singh, by one of the articles of which Peshāwār was ceded to the latter. The Amirs of Sindh having resisted Shuja's demands for money, he defeated them in a battle at Rori The Amirs now acknowledged his supremacy and accepted the terms offered by him.[4] Shuja then marched to Kandāhār and invested the place. But he was defeated by Dost Muhammad and fled.

Shortly afterwards Ranjit Singh entered into a conspiracy with the Barakzai brothers at Peshāwār against Dost Muhammad. A Sikh army of 9,000 men advanced as friends, but seized Peshāwār, and Sultan Muhammad Khan ignominiously fled. Dost Muhammad declared a religious war against Ranjit, and reached Peshāwār with a huge army. But Ranjit's diplomacy succeeded in dividing the brothers, and Dost Muhammad had to retire without striking a blow. Shortly afterwards he heard that his brother Sultan Muhammad was again intriguing with Ranjit Singh for an invasion of Kābul. He sent an army under his two sons who defeated the Sikh army at Jamrūd (A.D. 1837), but did not follow up their victory.

While the Barakzai revolution was convulsing Afghānistān, events were marching rapidly in Persia. By a series of successful fights, Russia had humbled the power of Persian rulers but not their pride. They still thought of the eastern empire of Nadir Shah and dreamt of re-establishing their authority in Khurāsān and Afghānistān, if not even further east in India. The British influence in Persian Court was replaced by Russian, and the Persian ambition admirably fitted in with the expansionist policy of Russia in Central and Eastern Asia.

Persia's claims over Afghānistān were based not only on the old conquests of Nadir Shah, but also on recent engagements between Persia and Afghānistān. These claims were encouraged by Russia which had now a complete grip over Persia. Persia accordingly planned to conquer Herāt.

3. *British negotiations with Persia and Afghānistān*

The stage was thus set for the "Central-Asian duel" between Russia and England. Lord Palmerston made emphatic protests to Russia against her activities in Persia. Though the Russian Court denied any complicity in the Persian design upon Herāt, it is generally believed that Count Simonitch, the Russian ambassador to Teheran, either under secret instruction of the Russian Government, or without it, encouraged the Persian king Shah Mahmud, who left his capital on July 23, 1837, with a big army towards Herāt. McNeill's objections were brushed aside, and the scant respect which Persia now felt for the British authority was also displayed in other ways. In October a courier, attached to the British mission, alleged that, while carrying a letter from Herāt to McNeill, he was waylaid by Persian soldiers, assaulted, and placed in confinement. Strong protests were lodged against this breach of diplomatic privilege, but no heed was paid to them by the Persian Government. In the meantime the representations of Palmerston forced the Russian Emperor to admit the truth and issue orders for the recall of Simonitch. But the latter still continued in Persia.

In November, 1837, the Persian army reached Herāt and made preparations to besiege the city. It was regarded by the British authorities as a serious crisis. Herāt occupied a very strategic position. Situated in a fertile oasis it could serve as an admirable basis of military operations against India, as it commanded the two military routes to India running respectively via Kābul and Kandāhār. As the British Minister in Persia commented: "In the present state of the relations between Persia and Russia, it cannot be denied that the progress of the former in Afghānistān is tantamount to the

advance of the latter". The British Government also took the same view, but they were unable to interfere in the war between Persia and Herāt in view of that clause in the treaty of 1814 with Persia which stipulated that the British must not interfere in any war between Persia and Afghānistān unless called upon to do so by both parties.

The diplomatic discomfiture in Persia turned the attention of the British Government towards Afghānistān. The initiative for a strong and active policy in that quarter was taken by Palmerston. A despatch from London dated 25th June, 1836, drew a very grave picture of the political situation. It reported that both Kābul and Kandāhār were carrying on intrigues with the Persian court, and referred to a rumour that Russia had entered into a secret agreement with the Khan (ruler) of Khiva. The Governor-General was warned "of the dangerous character of Russian action in Persia", and urged "to raise a timely barrier against the encroachments of Russian influence".[5] As an immediate concrete step it was suggested that an agent might be sent to Kābul to watch events.

Lord Auckland was thinking in the same line and had already issued instructions in September, 1836, to Captain Alexander Burnes to proceed to Kābul. It was ostensibly on a commercial mission, but its real object was to conclude an agreement with the Barakzai rulers of Kābul and Kandāhār with a view to making Afghānistān a barrier against Russian advance to India. Burnes arrived at Kābul in September, 1837, and found "Persian and Russian intrigue actively at work in Afghānistān". The precise nature and object of these intrigues are difficult to determine. It seems the Barakzai rulers of Kandāhār welcomed the Persian invasion of Herāt as a means of getting rid of the last remnant of the power of the Sadozais and adding it to their own dominions—an idea in which they were encouraged by the Russians and Persians. Dost Muhammad, on the other hand, was eager to secure the aid of Persia and Russia for recovering Peshāwār from Ranjit Singh. Letters were exchanged, and Count Simonitch, the Russian ambassador in the court of Persia, not only wrote to Dost Muhammad, but also sent a verbal message, to the effect that if Persia does not come to his help, Russia will, their object being to secure a passage to India. How far this message, as reported, truly represented the views of the Russian Government we have no means to determine.

Shortly a Russian emissary, Captain Vitkevitch (or Witkiewicz), made his appearance in Kābul with credentials from Count Simonitch and a letter of recommendation from the Shah of Persia. It is said that he also brought a congratulatory, but unsigned, letter purporting

to be from the Tsar Nicholas.[6] According to the information which Burnes could gather at Kābul, Vitkevitch offered, on behalf of Russia, pecuniary aid to Dost Muhammad for expelling Ranjit Singh from Peshāwār. About the same time a treaty was concluded between the rulers of Kandāhār and Shah of Persia providing for the transfer of Herāt to the former. This treaty was guaranteed by Count Simonitch.

But all the while Burnes also was not sitting idle. Very interesting light is thrown on the nature of Burnes's mission and the guiding principle of British foreign policy in respect of Afghānistān by the confidential correspondence between him and McNeill, the British Minister at the Court of Teheran. The latter wrote to Burnes recommending that the British should help Dost Muhammad in getting possession of Kandāhār and Herāt on condition that his relations with foreign governments should be controlled by the British. Captain Claude Wade, Governor-General's agent on the North-Western Frontier, regarded this policy with misgivings, as it would deprive the British of the powerful means which they then possessed of controlling the present rulers of Afghānistān. "Our policy", continued Wade, "ought not to be to destroy, but to use our endeavours to preserve and strengthen the different governments in Afghanistan as they at present stand."[7] The correspondence that passed between Burnes and the Government of India also shows the same sinister designs in respect of the kingdom of Afghānistān. The main objective was stated to be merely to weaken the influence of Russia and not to allow Dost Muhammad to play off Russia against the British. But the attention of Burnes was specifically drawn to the fact that "a consolidated and powerful Muhammadan State on our frontier might be anything rather than safe and useful to us, and the existing division of strength (i.e., between Kābul, Kandāhār and Herāt) seems far preferable."[8] This principle of "Divide and Rule" was accepted as the guiding policy by the British Government not only in respect of Afghānistān, but as regards the whole of Central Asia. Burnes accordingly intrigued simultaneously with the courts of Kandāhār and Kābul. He threatened the rulers of the former with the evil consequences of their intrigues with the Russians and, when they grew more pliable, offered British help in case of attack by the Persians, who were then besieging Herāt. To Dost Muhammad also he promised military help and sent an English military officer to him. But the Government of India thought that Burnes had gone too far and exceeded his instructions. He was accordingly asked to get out of the position created by him.[9]

The definite proposal of the Government of India was to the effect that Dost Muhammad should agree not to enter into political

relation with any other State, and as the price of this complete political isolation, the British would restrain Ranjit Singh from attacking his dominions.[10] But this vague promise appeared to the Amir to be but a poor compensation for the amount of sacrifice, in political power and prestige, which he was asked to make. What he wanted was the British help in arriving at an amicable settlement with Ranjit Singh about the political status of Peshāwār, which would remove all danger to his security from that quarter.

But Auckland looked upon an alliance with Ranjit Singh as the pivot of the whole frontier policy. He could not ignore the fact that "the extensive dominions of Ranjit and his superb army lay at the most vulnerable point of the frontier of British India," nor did he ever forget "that the Sikhs are always our first friends and steadfast allies".[11] Auckland felt, perhaps rightly, that if, in pursuance of the desire of Dost Muhammad, he put any pressure on Ranjit Singh in respect of Peshāwār, the Anglo-Sikh alliance would be in danger. Thus Burnes's mission was foredoomed to failure, even though he reached Kābul before the Russian envoy and established very cordial relation with the Amir.

There is a general misapprehension regarding the attitude of Dost Muhammad Khan. This is mainly due to the fact that in order to justify their later policy against that Afghān ruler, the Government of India published, in the form of a Blue Book, the correspondence of Burnes, after omitting important passages and extracts which represent Dost Muhammad in a favourable light. It is clear from Burnes's letters that while he was cordially welcomed by the Amir, the reception of the Russian agent was very cold and discouraging. The Amir made it quite plain that he would be "willing to receive a little from England, rather than much" from Russia or Persia. He wanted "the friendly mediation of the British Government" between him and Ranjit Singh in respect of Peshāwār, and discussed in a statesmanlike manner the various aspects of the problem and the complexities of the issues involved. Burnes was very favourably impressed with the moderation of the Amir's view. The latter did not seek possession of Peshāwār, but only his security from that quarter.[12] But the Government of India sent specific instructions to Burnes not to encourage the hopes of the Amir in any way in this respect as they decided to maintain the *status quo* in respect of Peshāwār. On January 20, 1838, Auckland wrote to Burnes that the Amir 'must give up all hope of obtaining Peshāwār'.[13]

It is quite clear that until this was communicated to Dost Muhammad, about the end of February, 1838, he had always clung to the

hope of securing British friendship and showed definite preference for Burnes and discouragement to Vitkevitch, the Russian agent.[14] It is only after all hopes of British help were extinguished that "a change came over the conduct of Dost Muhammad, and the Russian Mission began to rise in importance."[15] Even then the Amir did not give up all hope. On March 21, "the Ameer wrote a friendly letter to Lord Auckland, imploring him in language, almost of humility, to "remedy the grievances of the Afghans," to "give them a little encouragement and power." But there was no favourable response. In the meanwhile one of the ruling Sardars of Kandāhār came to Kābul in order to win over the Amir to the Persian alliance. As Burnes put it, the "do-nothing policy" of the Indian Government put the Russian agent on a high pedestal. "Vitkevitch was publicly sent for, and paraded through the streets of Kabul".[16] So Burnes left Kābul on April 26, 1838 The British diplomacy proved a complete failure in Afghānistān.

The British position in Persia was equally bad, to start with, and soon became worse. As noted above, Herāt was besieged in November, 1837. McNeill, the British Minister at Teheran, visited the Persian Shah in his camp and protested that the war was a violation of the treaty between England and Persia, but it proved of no avail. The promises of help and support from Russia as well as Kandāhār encouraged the Persians to press the siege. An Englishman, Eldred Pottinger, the nephew of the British Resident in Sindh, who was in Herāt at the time, ably aided the defence of Herāt which held on till June, 1838. In the meantime, as the position of Herāt seemed desperate, McNeill wrote to Auckland in March, 1838, suggesting the despatch of a British expeditionary force to the Gulf of Persia in order to compel the Shah to desist from his attack on Herāt. McNeill himself visited the Shah of Persia in his camp as well as the besieged ruler in Herāt, and arranged the terms of a treaty between the two. But, at the instigation of Simonitch, the Shah refused to ratify it. On June 7 McNeill declared his relations with the Government of Persia suspended, and set out for Tabriz. The prospect of the English was gloomy in the extreme.

Two circumstances now turned the tide in favour of the British. In response to the request of McNeill, Auckland had sent an expeditionary naval force to the Persian Gulf, and it occupied the island of Kharak, 30 miles north-west of Bushire, on June 19. Secondly, McNeill was authorised by Palmerston to tell the Persian Shah that the attack of Herāt by the Persians was regarded as a hostile act by the British. Referring to the occupation of Kharak, McNeill added "that if the Shah desired the British Government to

suspend the measures in progress for the vindication of its honour, he must at once retire from Herat." A formal message to this effect was handed over to the Persian Government by Col. Stoddart on August 12, 1838. The failure of the great assault on Herāt on June 24, 1838, the British expeditionary force, whose strength was magnified by rumours, and the firm tone of the British—all taken together created a great alarm in the mind of the Shah. He thereupon raised the siege of Herāt and retreated on September 9, 1838. It is interesting to note in this connection that by Article 9 of the treaty with Persia, England had bound herself not to interfere in any quarrels between the Afghāns and the Persians.

The British diplomatic representation to the Russian Government against their aggressive policy in Persia also bore fruit. That Government had already denied completely any design against the British in India, and now, as a proof of their good faith, disowned and recalled count Simonitch and Vitkevitch; while the Russian Emperor refused to confirm the guarantee which had been given by the Count to the treaty between Persia and Kandāhār. Vitkevitch in his disgrace blew out his brains.

4. *Declaration of War against Afghānistān.*

The retreat of the Persians from Herāt and the strong and open disavowal by Russian Government of any design to interfere in the affairs of Afghānistān must be regarded as a great triumph for the British, and it might well be hoped that the curtain would at last fall upon the cold diplomatic war going on between England, Russia, and Persia for years past. But that was not to be. In order to understand this it is necessary to consider the reaction produced upon the Government of India by the failure of the mission of Burnes. The Governor-General, Auckland, had bestowed much thought on the whole question and discussed it fully with his colleagues and advisers who had greater knowledge and experience on the subject. The momentous issue, in his opinion, was to decide, well in advance, the policy to be adopted in case Persia succeeded in capturing Herāt and then advanced further east into the heart of Afghānistān, for that would constitute a grave danger to the security of India. In an elaborate minute, dated 12 May, 1838, he held that three courses were open to the Government of India. The first was to defend the line of the Sindhu (Indus) without any concern with the affairs in Afghānistān; the second was to help the ruler of Kābul and Kandāhār to repel Persian invasion; the third was "to permit or to encourage Ranjit Singh to invade Afghānistān and to organise a British expedition against that country under the nominal lead of

Shah Shuja, in order to restore him to the throne." The Governor-General preferred the third alternative and recommended its adoption, whether Herāt successfully resists the Persians or succumbs to their attack.

The third course having been finally decided upon, negotiations were set on foot with Ranjit Singh to devise measures to restore Shuja on the throne of Kābul. Macnaghten was chosen to carry on the delicate diplomatic conversations with Ranjit at Lahore. What exactly transpired between the two is not definitely known. It appears that the British were at first inclined to induce Ranjit Singh to take the leading part and advance against Kābul with his army through Khyber Pass, while Shah Shuja would proceed via Sindh and Kandāhār, and the British would help him with money and officers to enable him to recover his throne.

Ranjit Singh, however, refused to take, independently, the leading part in invading Afghānistān, and clearly expressed the view that in this matter he wished to act only with the British Government. Ranjit Singh had his "misgivings regarding the success of an undertaking in which his own troops and the raw levies of Shah Shuja were to be the main actors," and coaxed Macnaghten into giving an assurance, if not a formal undertaking, that, if necessary, the British would send troops sufficient in number to ensure the success of the expedition. Thus Ranjit Singh had a complete diplomatic triumph over Macnaghten. Whereas the Governor-General seems to have ruled out the idea of taking the leading part in the invasion of Afghānistān, the terms of agreement with Ranjit Singh ultimately forced him to take that very course. The Lion of the Panjāb seems to have outwitted his fellow Lion of Britain.

The treaty, which was in effect one between Ranjit Singh and Shah Shuja, guaranteed by the British Government, confirmed Ranjit's right over the territories he then held, including Peshāwār, and no one was to cross the Sindhu or Sutlej without his permission. But he renounced his claim on Sindh, which would belong to the Amirs on payment of a pecuniary compensation to the Maharaja. He would maintain not less than 5,000 Muhammadan troops at Peshāwār for the support of the Shah, and would receive two lakhs of rupees a year from Shah Shuja for this purpose. The Shah gave up all claims of supremacy and arrears of tribute over Sindh on payment, by the Amirs of that country, of a sum of money as might be determined under the mediation of the British Government; fifteen lakhs of rupees of such payment being made over by him to Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Shuja also bound himself and his successors not to enter into negotiation with any foreign State without

the consent of the British and the Sikh Governments. On a closer analysis of the treaty it would appear that while all the advantages were with Maharaja Ranjit Singh, his commitments seem to have been of a very vague character. He was to send his own troops to Kābul, but the number was not specified, and he might call upon Shuja to supply his own troops. This Tripartite treaty was signed by Ranjit Singh on June 26, 1838, approved by the Governor-General, and received the signature of Shah Shuja on 17 July, 1838.

The Tripartite Treaty, as noted above, did not lay down any military obligations of the British, beyond furnishing a handful of European officers. In fact, the first idea of the Governor-General was that the main expedition should be undertaken by the Sikhs and the Afghān army, either together or each following its own way. In any case it was the idea, up to the very end of negotiations, that Shuja himself would take the leading part. But gradually the scheme underwent a radical change. It was ultimately decided that it was mainly the British army which would undertake to seat Shuja on his throne. Accordingly, arrangement was made for the equipment of a grand army consisting of two powerful detachments, one from Bengal and the other from Bombay Army.

Much ink has been spilt in apportioning the responsibility for the Afghān policy, particularly the idea of sending a powerful British army, between Auckland, the Governor-General, and his advisers, specially William Macnaghten, the Chief Secretary, his assistant, Henry Torrens, John Colvin, the Private Secretary of the Governor-General, the Commander-in-Chief, and Captains Burnes and Wade. But while the question may be of great significance in a biography of Auckland, it has little importance in a general history of India. For, in the first place, such questions might be raised in regard to almost every grave issue decided by the Government of India, and secondly, it is almost impossible, from the very nature of the case, to come to any satisfactory conclusion regarding the point when we remember that influence might be exercised, to a very large extent, by private consultation and day to day discussion of which no faithful record is likely to be preserved. In any event, under the existing constitution, the Governor-General must be prepared to take full responsibility for any policy to which he gave his approval, even if he had not initiated it.

On October 1, 1838, the Government of India issued a manifesto from Simla tracing in detail the course of events which led to the war and offering a justification of the policy pursued by the Governor-General.[17] It is unnecessary to comment at length upon

this manifesto. So far as negotiations with Dost Muhammad are concerned, it is a tissue of lies from beginning to end, and the entire document is a string of misrepresentations, deliberate distortion of facts and views, and misleading assumptions unsupported by any evidence. Even the Anglo-Indian public of those days, though the whole truth was not known to them, denounced the manifesto in the strongest terms. "The press seized upon it and tore it to pieces. If it were not pronounced to be a collection of absolute falsehoods, it was described as a most disingenuous distortion of the truth."[18]

Kaye has truly remarked that "never, since the English in India began the work of King-making, had a more remarkable document issued from the council-chamber of an Anglo-Indian Viceroy".[19] Instead of 'remarkable' he might have easily said 'preposterous'.

One instance should suffice to indicate the nature of the manifesto. The original objects of the mission of Burnes, we are told, "were purely of a commercial nature". But after his departure "the troops of Dost Muhammad Khan had made a sudden and unprovoked attack on those of our ancient ally Maharajah Runjeet Singh". In order to avert a calamitous war Captain Burnes was authorised "to intimate to Dost Muhammad Khan, that if he should evince a disposition to come to just and reasonable terms with the Maharajah, his Lordship would exert his good offices with his Highness for the restoration of an amicable understanding between the two powers." But "it appeared", continues the manifesto, "that Dost Muhammad Khan, chiefly in consequence of his reliance upon Persian encouragement and assistance, persisted.... in urging the most unreasonable pretentions,......that he avowed schemes of aggrandisement and ambition injurious to the security and peace of the frontiers of India; and that he openly threatened, in furtherance of these schemes, to call every foreign aid which he could command." The correspondence of Burnes, referred to above, would prove to the meanest intellect, that all these allegations are diametrically opposite of truth. All declarations of war not unnaturally contain suppression or distortion of facts to a certain extent, but it would be difficult to name any such document in the history of the world which can beat the Simla manifesto in respect of deliberate suppression of truth and mischievous and malicious distortion of facts.

"The Simla manifesto had placed the siege of Herāt by the Persians in the foreground as the main cause of the contemplated expedition."[20] But unfortunately for Lord Auckland, this siege, which formed the *casus belli*, was withdrawn about three weeks before the manifesto was issued. It is true that he was unaware of it at the time, but when, shortly afterwards, this all-important fact came

to his knowledge, and the chief, if not the only justification for the military expedition ceased to exist, Auckland did not abandon the idea, though there was ample time for making a graceful retreat from the bellicose attitude which was both unjust and inexpedient. There was also no inherent difficulty in adopting such a course, for under the terms of the Tripartite Treaty, the British were under no obligation to provide any military help. But Auckland persisted in his aggressive policy. A proclamation was issued on November 8, 1838,[21] in which, after announcing that the Persians had raised the siege of Herāt it was declared that the Governor-General "will continue to prosecute with vigour the measures which have been announced, with a view to the substitution of a friendly for a hostile power in the eastern provinces of Afghānistān, and to the establishment of a permanent barrier against schemes of aggression upon our North-West frontier." Perhaps the Governor-General was unwilling to forego the laudable desire, expressed in his earlier manifesto, "to assist in restoring the union and prosperity of the Afghān people" and "to put an end to the distractions by which, for so many years, the welfare and happiness of the Afghāns have been impaired."

The aggressive policy which the British Government adopted towards Afghānistān has been supported by some and adversely criticised by others. It is unnecessary to discuss at length the question whether Shah Shuja had any legal or moral right to the throne of Kābul. In that country, actual possession was the only right recognised alike by the ruler and the people. Besides, it would be idle to pretend that such questions really had played any part in the decision of the British Government. It is a plain fact that they chose to interfere in the affairs of Afghānistān in order to serve their own interest, and not in defence of any right such as Shah Shuja might have possessed They tried to establish their influence through Dost Muhammad, but failed, and now sought to achieve the same end by placing Shah Shuja on the throne in his place. They cared little who occupied the throne of Kābul so long as he was subservient to the British. In any case, it is obvious that Shah Shuja's claim to the throne of Kābul was very questionable. His elder brother, whom he had forcibly dispossessed, again took possession of it after he left, and the latter's son Kamran, who was still ruling in Herāt, a part of the kingdom of Afghānistān, had therefore undoubtedly superior claims to the Afghān kingdom. The British Government and the historians who have supported them justify the action on the ground that Shah Shuja's claim was in any event better than that of the usurper Dost Muhammad. But it must not be forgotten that Shah Shuja himself was no better than a usurper when he seized the throne of Kābul by force from his elder brother. On the whole,

no unprejudiced man can possibly deny that there was no justification for attacking Dost Muhammad. Considering the difficult position in which he was placed, it is now generally admitted that he did not do or say anything which might justly be construed as a provocation by the British.

On the other hand, the correspondence of Burnes leaves no doubt that Dost Muhammad was sincerely anxious to come to an understanding with the British, and decidedly preferred an alliance with them to that with either Persia or Russia. His attitude was, however, deliberately misrepresented by the Governor-General, and what was far worse, the correspondence of Burnes, as mentioned above, was mutilated to lend support to his view.

Even according to the Governor-General's manifesto, the sole offence of Dost Muhammad consisted in the preference shown by him to a Persian over a British alliance which really means his refusal to ally himself with the British against Persia and Russia, a course which offered no advantage to him, but might easily draw upon him the wrath of a mighty European power which was his next-door neighbour. If such a refusal may be regarded as a sufficient cause for a declaration of war against him by the British in alliance with his avowed enemy, the Sikhs, perhaps no aggressive and unprovoked war in the history of the world would lack in a justifiable cause of action. It should be remembered that up to the very end Dost Muhammad did not form any alliance with Russia, and maintained strict neutrality. Auckland's diabolical scheme of ruining him finds the nearest parallel in the conspiracy of Warren Hastings with Shuja-ud-daulla for destroying the Rohillas, though with far less excuse.

Apart from the question of legal or moral justification, the course adopted by the Government of India has been adversely criticised on grounds of expediency, both at the time and ever since. The distance, climate and the nature of the land offered so many serious difficulties to an invading army, that an expedition to Kābul should not have been lightly undertaken save in an extreme emergency involving great risk to the safety and security of India. Such an emergency never existed, in fact, and whatever apprehensions might have been entertained were removed by the withdrawal of the Persians from Herāt.

On the other hand, Auckland's action has been justified, even by eminent authorities, mainly on two grounds. It has been urged in the first place that "he had no option in the matter. He had gone too far to recede." The validity of this assumption may be

doubted, as noted above. Secondly, it has been argued "that the isolation in which Dost Muhammad was now left by the Russo-Persian withdrawal was, on military grounds, a special reason for pressing on against him."[22] This is no doubt a weighty argument, and may be presumed to have largely influenced the decision of Auckland. But it is an admission of the British aggression in its most naked and brutal form, without the slightest pretence of any moral justification or political necessity.

There was, however, another aspect of the problem. A pertinent question, asked at the time, was that supposing Shah Shuja could be placed on the throne with the help of the British army, could he maintain it without the same? As the Duke of Wellington very tersely put it, "the consequence of the advance of the British army into Afghānistān would be a perennial march into that country."

It should, however, be pointed out that the responsibility for the Governor-General's action must be shared by the Home authorities. For they fully approved of armed intervention, though they at the same time hinted at the possibility of avoiding it. They, no doubt, expressed some misgivings about the course of action proposed to be pursued, but were mainly guided by their apprehensions about Russia, and regarded the Afghān expedition as a part of the Central Asian Policy.

The public opinion, both in England and India (among the Anglo-Indians, or at least a large section of it), was also in favour of the expedition. It is now held that this was mainly due to the fact that a Blue Book, published in 1839, gave a garbled version of the despatches, conveying a false impression of the views of Burnes as well as of Dost Muhammad. Though this was denied by Palmerston in the House of Commons, the revised version of the despatches, published in 1859, fully supports the charge, and "no defence worth considering has ever been offered of such an extraordinary performance."[23] But it is difficult to exonerate the English public on this ground alone. For the broad fact remained unchallenged that the British nation, alarmed at the bogey of a Russian invasion, did not scruple in the least to destroy an innocent neighbourly power. As noted above, the nearest parallel to such a crime in the history of British India is afforded by Hastings' action against the Rohillas. But while this was denounced by a strong section of the public in England, the Afghān war was generally applauded, and the perpetrators of the crime were rewarded with the highest honours. The difference in the reaction against these two deplorable incidents may

be taken as a fair measure of the demoralisation brought upon Englishmen by the virus of imperialism in course of half a century.

5. *The Afghān War*[24]

The British army destined for the conquest of Afghānistān was called "the army of the Indus" (*à la Napoleon*). As the shrewd Ranjit Singh did not like the idea that the British troops should march through his country, the Bengal army, like that of Bombay, had to march through Sindh. The Governor-General pompously announced in his manifesto: "His Majesty Shah Shoojah-ool-Moolk will enter Afghanistan surrounded by his own troops, and will be supported against foreign interference and factious opposition by a British army." Thus the fiction was maintained that the powerful British army was only an auxiliary force aiding Shah Shuja, who was proceeding at the head of his own troops to recover his rightful throne. To keep up this pretence, a force was placed at the disposal of the Shah, which consisted of a troop of native horse-artillery, two regiments of cavalry, and five of infantry. Major-General Simpson was appointed the Commander of this force. In addition to this expeditionary force proceeding through Southern Afghānistān, the Sikh army of Ranjit Singh was to proceed directly towards Kābul via Peshāwār and Khyber pass. This was to co-operate with what was called the Shahjada's army, namely, a force composed of British sepoys and adventurers under the nominal command of Timur, the son of Shah Shuja.

Diplomatic fiction supplemented the military fiction. Macnaghten was appointed "Envoy and Minister on the part of the Government of India at the Court of Shooja-ool-Moolk", and accompanied the expedition with his full staff.

The whole of the Bengal force under Sir Willoughby Cotton was encamped, by the end of November, 1838, at Ferozepore where, amidst gay festivities and gorgeous display, a series of interviews took place between the Governor-General and Ranjit Singh. The raising of the siege of Herāt produced two notable changes. The strength of the expeditionary force was somewhat reduced, and Sir Henry Fane, the Commandar-in-Chief, whose health was rapidly falling, was relieved of its command, which was given to Sir John Keane, the Commander of the Bombay division.

Early in December, the army of His Majesty Shah Shuja moved from Ferozepore, followed by the Bengal division of the British army, and both arrived on the banks of the Sindhu in the third week of January, 1839. Here, a great difficulty arose with the Amirs of Sindh. The relations of the British with these chiefs will be re-

lated in detail elsewhere.[25] Here it will suffice to state, that in disregard of solemn assurances given by the Government of India to the Amirs that no military stores would be carried along the Sindhu, the army and its equipments were transported through Sindh, and the Amirs were coerced, under threats of dire consequences, to render all help to the British army, proceeding to invade a country with which they had friendly relations. Further, though Shuja gave pledges, written on copies of Qur'ān, releasing the Amirs of Sindh from any obligation of payment to him,[26] they were now forced to pay twenty-five lakhs of Rupees to be shared by Ranjit Singh and Shah Shuja in the proportion of 15 to 10.

The Bengal army crossed the Sindhu without any difficulty and reached Shikarpur on 20 February. Hitherto the army of Shah Shuja had always preceded the British force by a few days' march. Henceforth the order of march was changed. The British troops moved in advance, "being better able to cope with an enemy" than the raw levy of His Majesty. The army marched through Bolan pass and reached Quetta on March, 26. Here the Bombay force joined the Bengal Army, and its Commander, Sir John Keane, the Commander-in-Chief of the whole army, established his headquarters at Quetta on April 6, 1839. Both the columns had suffered great hardships and privations during their march through Sindh, and bitterly complained of lack of friendship on the part of the people. They failed to realise that the British troops as well as Shuja were most unwelcome guests who were tolerated merely at the point of the bayonet.

The progress of the army in Afghānistān would have been more like a joy-ride than any gruesome fight, but for the rigorous climate and shortness of provisions. The Afghāns were overcome more by gold than by iron bullets. Bribery on a large scale won over the tribes, one after another, and there was hardly any campaigning. Kandāhār surrendered without any fight on 25 April, 1839, and there Shah Shuja was solemnly enthroned on an improvised platform serving as *masnad*. As soon as he ascended the throne, "a salvo was discharged from a hundred and one pieces of artillery." John Keane and others offered *nazars*, and the "army of the Indus" marched in review in front of the throne.

In his manifesto of October 1, 1838, Lord Auckland had declared that the popularity of Shah Shuja, throughout Afghānistān, was proved "by the strong and unanimous testimony of the best authorities." Doubts had arisen on this point in the minds of many in course of this march, but it was put to the test after Shuja's enthronement at Kandāhār. "No alacrity was shown in joining his

standard," and when, in accordance with custom, he sent ten thousand Rupees to the Ghilzai chiefs with a copy of the Qur'ān, on which to swear allegiance to the Shah, they kept the money, but returned the book, refusing to "offer any pledge of adherence to the royal cause." And this was not the only instance of this kind.

After a few short skirmishes the army appeared before Ghazni on July 21. The fort proved to be much stronger than the British anticipated, but though the heavy guns had been left behind, bribery and treachery did their part and the fort was taken by assault with a loss of only 17 killed and 165 wounded.

Shortly afterwards Nawab Jabbar Khan, brother of Dost Muhammad, arrived at the British camp with overtures for peace. He offered to acknowledge Shah Shuja as sovereign on condition that Dost Muhammad should be his *wazir*. Not only was this refused, but it was insisted that Dost Muhammad should leave Afghānistān The negotiations accordingly broke off, and on July 30, the British army began to march towards Kābul.

Dost Muhammad now made a final effort to resist the invaders But he soon discovered that his troops were not loyal to his cause He made a touching appeal to them in the name of their country, but when this proved unavailing, he fled towards the Hindu Kush It would not be unreasonable to suppose that here, too, bribery and treachery played their part.

On August 7, 1839, Shah Shuja entered Kābul in triumph. As a contemporary historian has observed: "It was graced by all the marks of honour which the British authorities could offer, and was deficient in nothing but the congratulations of the people over whom the restored king was to reign."[27] "It was more like a funeral procession than the entry of a king into the capital of his restored dominions "[28] Prince Timur and the Sikh contingent, marching through the Khyber Pass, had to put up a strenuous fight for capturing the fort of Ali Masjid, but took Jalālābād without any difficulty They reached Kābul on September 3, and the whole expedition had thus a triumphant end. Honours were now showered upon the heroes from both sides. Shah Shuja instituted an Order of Knighthood on the model of the British Order of the Bath, to which the officers of the "army of the Indus" were liberally admitted, together with a few distinguished civil functionaries. The British Government did not lag behind. Auckland was made an Earl, Sir John Keane, a Baron, and both Pottinger and Macnaghten, Baronets A pension of two thousand pounds a year was granted to Keane and his two next *heirs male*. Others were suitably rewarded with Knighthood, G.C.B., etc.

In his famous manifesto of October 1, 1838, to which reference has been made above, Auckland had assumed, on the "strong and unanimous testimony of the best authorities," that Shah Shuja was popular throughout Afghānistān, and therefore declared it to be his intention to withdraw the British army as soon as His Majesty was "replaced on the throne by his own subjects and adherents", "and the independence and integrity of Afghānistān established". The party hostile to Shah Shuja also liked nothing better. The brother of Dost Muhammad, who unsuccessfully negotiated with the British at Ghazni, as mentioned above, frankly put it as follows: "If Shah Shuja is really a king, and come to the kingdom of his ancestors, what is the use of your army and name? You have brought him by your money and arms into Afghānistān, leave him now with us Afghāns, and let him rule us if he can."[29]

The sinister meaning of these observations was soon proved by the hostile attitude of the people, almost throughout the country, towards the army of occupation, and many ugly incidents caused thereby. Lt Col. Henry, marching in charge of a treasure convoy from Kandāhār to Kābul, was waylaid by the Kojuks and killed. The Ghilzais had been openly demonstrating their hostility and Captain Outram had to march against them. The tribes who controlled the passes of the Khyber, discontented with the amount of money distributed among them to secure peace, rose up against the small detachments left at different posts between Peshāwār and Jalālābād.

These and many other incidents of a similar nature made the British painfully aware of the fact that they were in a hostile territory rather than in a friendly kingdom. The popularity of Shah Shuja, on which Auckland had waxed eloquent, and which formed the basis of his Afghān policy, was nowhere to be seen. He had therefore to reconsider his original plan of withdrawing the British army. Ultimately it was decided to withdraw the major part of the British troops, according to original plan, and leave about five or six regiments at Kābul. Accordingly a part of the Bengal force, under General Nott and Col. Sale, was left in Afghānistān, while the rest of it, as well as the entire Bombay column, returned to India, the former by the Khyber pass, and the latter by the way by which they came.

In course of the return journey the Bombay column stormed the fortress of Kalat in Baluchistan, not far from Quetta. The ruler of this place had incurred the displeasure of the British when they were marching towards Kābul, because he did not help them sufficiently. The fact is that the Baluchis were hostile to the British,

whom they naturally detested as foreign invaders, and bitterly resented the damage to their crops, caused by the advancing British troops. As noted before, the British army suffered heavily for want of food, and the British felt 'righteous' indignation that they were not being liberally helped by the Baluchis out of their difficulties. For some reasons, the ruler of Kalat, Mehrab Khan, was specially selected for wreaking their vengeance. This is quite clear from a letter of Macnaghten written during the advance to Kābul, in which he suggested, by way of punishing the Khan of Kalat, that a part of his territories should be annexed to Shah Shuja's dominions. But the time was inopportune and the British could do nothing. Now, flushed with victory, the British gave vent to their pent-up feeling of fury. Although no provocation was given by the Khan, and no specific charges were made against him, Kalat was attacked by a British detachment sent from Quetta for this purpose. The Khan made a brave and protracted resistance, and fought "with desperate valour" which extorted admiration even from the British. But nothing availed; the fortress was stormed, though the British loss was heavy; Mehrab Khan died, sword in hand, and another chief was put up in his place as a protégé of the British. As suggested by Macnaghten, three districts of the Khan were annexed to the dominions of Shah Shuja. A British historian has remarked: "It may be doubted whether these proceedings were wise, and it seems certain that they were unjust."[30]

The Bengal force, returning under the Commander-in-Chief, suffered a great deal from the attacks of the Afghān tribes living in the neighbourhood of the Khyber Pass, who made plundering raids and carried off provisions and camels. Ultimately Macnaghten made peace with them by pecuniary grants, and the army safely returned to India. By a general order, dated January 2, 1840, the "army of the Indus" was formally dissolved.

6. *British Disaster in Afghānistān*

It was not long before the British army, left in Afghānistān, realised that it was far easier to seat Shah Shuja on the throne of Kābul than to keep him there. Widespread discontent gathered momentum throughout the dominions of Shuja; the people disliked him and seemed to be determined not to submit to his authority. Early in 1840, a British detachment was sent against a refractory chief of Pishoot, a fort situated about fifty miles from Jalālābād. The British forces stormed the first gate but were unable to break down the inner one and had to retreat with heavy loss. Similar acts of defiance occurring in other places could be put down only after

heavy fighting in which the Afghān tribes always offered a stout resistance. A regular and sanguinary fight took place with the Ghilzais, a notorious tribe, on May 16, 1840. The Baluchis cut off, at Nufusk Pass, Lt. Clark who had gone out of the fort of Kahun with a small party to procure supplies. In order to supply the fort, Major Cliborn was dispatched on August 12 with a convoy from Sukkur. He met with a terrible disaster in the same place. He won a victory, but could not carry the pass and had to fall back, pursued by the enemy; his men died of thirst in hundreds and he lost all his arms and equipments. Kahun and Quetta were besieged and almost the whole country rose in revolt. A great disaster befell the British at Kalat. The new chief set up by them could not defend himself against a rising of the people who besieged the fort. He surrendered and abdicated in favour of Nasir Khan, son of Mehrab Khan, mentioned above. The British Lieutenant, who was left there to protect him with a sepoy force, was made prisoner and subsequently murdered.

It would be tedious to relate all the events in detail. But it was now apparent even to the meanest intellect, that Shah Shuja was maintained on the throne not by his own strength but only by the British bayonets. Series of outbreaks like those mentioned above, all over the country, kept the British forces almost continuously engaged in suppressing them. Though generally successful, they also met with occasional reverses.

Encouraged by the favourable turn of events in Afghānistān, its ex-ruler, Dost Muhammad Khan, who had fled towards the Hindu Kush, now made an effort to regain his throne. He made an alliance with the Uzbegs under Wali of Kulun and advanced upon Bamiyān. Their joint force was defeated on September 18 by a British detachment, and soon the Wali was won over, evidently by the British gold. Dost Muhammad now moved towards Kohistān and was joined by many chiefs. He was defeated near the entrance of the Ghorbund Pass, on September 29, but the British forces were repulsed at Julgah, another fort occupied by the rebel chiefs of Kohistān, on October 3. Throughout the month of October Dost Muhammad fled from place to place till, joined by some of Shah Shuja's troops, he marched towards Kābul. A battle took place at Parwandurrah on November 2, 1840, in which the British cavalry suffered severe losses owing to the defection of the Afghān troops in the midst of the battle. Two days after this glorious triumph, Dost Muhammad, who had no illusion about the ultimate result of the contest, rode towards Kābul, and surrendered himself to the British envoy, Macnaghten.

Dost Muhammad received cordial treatment at the hands of the British envoy, and was sent to India on November 12, 1840, under a strong escort. In recommending to the Governor-General that the ex-Amir should be treated with liberality, Macnaghten refuted the argument that Dost Muhammad should not be treated more handsomely than Shah Shuja. "The Shah," he said, "had no claim upon us. We had no hand in depriving him of his kingdom, whereas we ejected the Dost, who never offended us, in support of our policy, of which he was the victim".[31] At last even Macnaghten blurted out a great truth which may be looked upon as the strongest denunciation of the Afghān policy of which he is generally believed to have been the chief adviser and advocate.

On the very day when Dost Muhammad surrendered, the British army re-occupied Kalat after defeating the army of Nasir Khan. But though the year 1840 thus ended auspiciously for the British, the condition of Afghānistān was still a source of great anxiety to them. The situation was admirably and accurately summed up by the Secret Committee in their letter to the Government of India, dated December 31, 1840.[32] They pointed out that "for many years to come, the restored monarchy will have need of a British force", and that this force must necessarily be a large one. The maintenance of such a force and the suppression of "repeated revolts and disorders" would entail too heavy a financial burden on the Indian Government. There were only two alternatives open to them,—either to face this intolerable burden, both military and financial, or "the entire abandonment of the country and a frank confession of failure." The Secret Committee made it clear that they preferred the second alternative; the Council of the Governor-General, however, decided in favour of the continued occupation of Afghānistān. But both the Government of India and Macnaghten fully realised the need of reducing the drain upon the resources of India, and Macnaghten was forced to reduce the stipends or subsidies to the Afghān tribal chiefs

All the tribal chiefs regarded this measure of economy as a great blow upon their powers and privileges. They held secret meetings and entered into a conspiracy to recover by force what was withheld from them. The Eastern Ghilzais, who had other grievances, were the first to strike the blow. They left Kābul and occupied the passes on the road to Jalālābād, cutting off all communications with India.

After a protracted warfare with the Ghilzais, involving several bloody encounters, Humjee Khan, a man of high rank and Governor of the Ghilzais, was sent to treat with them. But it later transpired

that he himself was the instigator of the hostile movement. A truce was arranged by Macgregor, after making valuable concessions. But it was of no avail. Sir Robert Sale, who was marching with his force to Jalālābād on his return journey to India, was attacked by the Afghāns. He forced the pass of Khurd Kābul occupied by the rebel chiefs, but was wounded in the fight. A number of skirmishes followed in which the British gained victories, but the troops suffered heavily on account of attacks of isolated bodies of Afghāns issuing from hills and dales. On October 29, 1841, while marching from Jagdalak towards Gandammak, Sale found the hills bristling with armed men who poured a heavy fire from all sides. The army pushed through the pass after defeating the enemy, but these reappeared and fell upon the rear-guard of the British army. Sale not only lost a number of men, but also a heavy quantity of baggage and camp equipage. Next day he wrote a letter giving a dismal account of the military position. Referring to his troops he says: "Since leaving Kabul, they have been kept constantly on the alert by attacks by night and day,.....each succeeding morning has brought its affair with a bold and active enemy."

At Gandammak, Sale got the news that Jalālābād was threatened by the enemy. He forthwith marched upon it and arrived there on November 12, 1841, "having sustained considerable annoyance from plunderers" on the way. The whole of his camp equipage was destroyed and the sick and the wounded amounted to more than three hundred. He found Jalālābād invested on every side, but by a bold charge dispersed the enemy. The position at Jalālābād, however, gave cause for grave anxiety. Its defences were weak, the protecting army was much smaller than necessary, provisions were short, and there was no expectation of securing any help from any quarter in near future.

In the meantime things were getting from bad to worse in Kābul. There was still a considerable number of British troops in that city. Part of these was stationed at the Bala Hissār, the royal citadel, which overlooked the town, and the rest were in the cantonments lying at a distance of about three miles. Some British officers resided in the town and part of the commissariat establishment was also within its walls.

Rumours and warnings of a secret conspiracy in Kābul to drive away the British had reached the authorities from various sources, but they paid no heed to it. It had assumed serious proportions on the evening of November 1, when, according to later reports, the hostile chiefs met to discuss the measures to be taken to incite the people. They decided to "announce on the one hand that the king

had given orders for the destruction of the infidels", and to spread a report, on the other, that the British authorities were bent upon "seizing the principal chiefs and sending them prisoners to London." Sadyat Khan, at whose house the meeting was held, was once rudely treated by Burnes, and he proposed that the "first overt act of violence on the morrow should be an attack on the house of the man who had so insulted him."[33] How far these reports of the conspiracy may be accepted as accurate it is difficult to say. But there is no doubt about what followed.

On the morning of November 2, 1841, a riot broke out in the city. The shops were looted and the houses of British officers attacked. Sir Alexander Burnes, his brother Lt. Burnes of the Bombay army, and Lt. Broadfoot of the Bengal European regiment lost their lives in the hands of the unruly mob. The Shah's treasury and the residence of Burnes were plundered and burnt, and every man, woman and child found in either were killed. Shortly, the revolt spread all over the city, and was marked by a lust for the blood of the Europeans, some of whom were wounded, and others narrowly escaped.

The anti-British insurrection continued on the following days and soon took an alarming character. Had the British authorities taken strong measures at the very outset, the whole trouble might have been nipped in the bud. But at first they did not regard the outbreak as a serious one, and when they realised the true situation, they seem to have been paralysed by the sudden outburst of popular frenzy on a wide scale. They made a few desultory efforts, but there was no sign of any well-conceived plan for either attack or defence. Important posts in the town, held by the British, fell in quick succession for want of ammunition which never reached them in spite of pressing applications to the authorities. In particular, the loss of the British Commissariat fort was a severe blow to the safety and security of the British army. It was the principal depot containing provisions of all kinds, and was bravely defended by Ensign Warren. He repeatedly asked for succour, and it was represented to the General by the commissariat officers that the capture of the depot would mean sure destruction of the British troops, as the cantonments did not possess more than two days' provisions and it was impossible to procure supplies in the prevailing circumstances. In spite of all this, Elphinstone, the aged Commander-in-Chief, failed to send an adequate force during the two days following the outbreak, and the depot fell into the hands of the insurgents. "This was a blow at the British cause in Kābul before which it reeled." It is unnecessary to give further details of the insurrection which

grew in momentum every day, and of the unsuccessful efforts of the British to put it down. The most notable point in the whole affray was the cowardice and lack of discipline displayed by the British infantry, both native and European, in several engagements with the rebels. The troops lost heart and showed a craven spirit, so unusual to them, which not unoften led to grave disasters. They would not obey the orders to advance, and often deserted their line and posts in the face of hostile attack. In a word, a large section of the British troops seem to have been almost as much paralysed as their old Commander-in-Chief. The two expeditions, sent on November 22 and 23, to capture a village called Behmaura, ending in veritable disgrace and disasters, offer a striking illustration of the inefficiency of the commanding officers and the sunken spirit of the men. The British historians have deplored this strange shortcoming of the Indian soldiers, but have not cared to explore its causes. Some light is thrown on this by the long memorandum prepared by Shaikh Hidayat Ali, Subahdar and Sardar Bahadur, Bengal Sikh Police Battalion, immediately after the Mutiny of 1857, in order to explain its causes. He has clearly pointed out that the Afghān expedition was highly disliked by the sepoys who took part in it. The Hindu sepoys feared that they had lost their caste, and the Muslim sepoys were dissatisfied as they had to fight against men of their own faith. Actually, a Muslim Subahdar and a Hindu Subahdar were, respectively, shot dead and dismissed for expressing these sentiments. But the feelings could not be checked by such punishment. The sepoys had no heart in the fight and we are even told that they sometimes even shot in the air rather than at their opponents.[34]

But the insurrection did not long remain confined to the city of Kābul. The fort of Laghman was attacked and the British garrison removed to Charikar. This was invested by the Afghāns, and desertion, followed by open mutiny among the British troops who killed their own officer, forced the remnant to evacuate the fort and march towards Kābul. All the fugitives were lost except two officers and a single soldier, who reached Kābul, more dead than alive. Two officers stationed at a fort in Kohistān, about 12 miles from Kābul, were deserted by their men and murdered, and large bodies of Kohistānis and Nijrowis were ready to join the rebels at Kābul. A detachment proceeding from Ghazni to Kābul was surprised and cut off. Of the force left by Sale at Gandammak, the major portion deserted to the enemy and the rest had to proceed to Jalālābād, leaving arms and equipage. Further east, at Pesh Bulak, between Jalālābād and Khyber Pass, Captain Ferris of the Shah's

service was surrounded by the enemy, and though he cut his way through, a rich treasure, left behind, fell into the hands of the enemy.

But the most severe blow was dealt to the power and prestige of the British in Afghānistān by the fall of Ghazni. When the situation was getting worse every day, Col. Palmer, the officer commanding at Ghazni, suggested to the authorities at Kābul a plan for repairing and strengthening its defence, but the necessary sanctions never came. The Englishmen fondly believed that the people were devoted to their cause. But like many other assumptions this also proved untrue. By means of intrigue and treachery such a large number of Afghāns were able to enter the city from outside, that the British garrison were forced to take shelter in the citadel (December, 1841). They maintained this position till March 6, 1842, when they evacuated it under terms of an agreement which secured their safe retreat under an escort for protection But the day after they left the citadel, they were treacherously attacked and a large number of officers and men were killed. The sepoys escaped by digging through a hole in the outer wall of the town, but they lost their way owing to a heavy fall of snow, and were all cut to pieces or imprisoned. The officers surrendered themselves.

The real nature of the troubles in Afghānistān was now slowly dawning upon the British statesmen. It was no longer a mere dislike for, or aversion to, Shah Shuja, but a national revolt of the Afghāns against the domination of the hated Feringhees. The Afghāns could now clearly see that it was the British who were ruling over them in the name of their puppet ruler. This was a rude shock to the freedom-loving tribes of Afghānistān. To this were added the insults, indignities and sufferings, inherent in the occupation of a country by foreign troops. But there was one special form of these which touched to the quick the sensibilities of the Afghāns. They were very jealous of the honour of their women, but the British officers could not resist the attractions of the women of Kābul. It is better to throw a veil over the details, but a general reference must be made to this indelicate affair, both for the sake of historical truth, as well as an important cause of the growing conflagration. The following statement by an eminent British historian who has made a special study of the Afghān War, may be taken as a fairly accurate description of the general situation.

"The inmate of the Mahomedan Zenana was not unwilling to visit the quarters of the Christian stranger. For two long years, now, had this shame been burning itself into the hearts of the Kabulis; and there were some men of note and influence among

them who knew themselves to be thus wronged. Complaints were made; but they were made in vain. The scandal was open, undisguised, notorious. Redress was not to be obtained. The evil was not in course of suppression. It went on till it became intolerable and the injured then began to see that the only remedy was in their own hands."[35]

Various causes,—political, social and religious,—combined to lead to a general national rising of the Afghāns against the British. The men on the spot, particularly Macnaghten, failed to realise its nature and gravity, and belittled its importance. But the Governor-General took a saner view of things from a distance. On December 1, 1841, he wrote to the Commander-in-Chief: "It is, however, I fear, more likely that the national spirit has [been] generally roused. ."[36] Three days later he wrote to Macnaghten, pointing out how futile it would be "to continue to wrestle against the universal opinion, national and religious, which has been so suddenly and so strongly brought in array against us" Lord Auckland accordingly was anxious to devise a means by which "all that belongs to India may be most immediately and most honourably withdrawn from the country."[37]

Macnaghten was, however, an incurable optimist. He believed, even as late as September 1841, that "the noses of the Durani Khans had been brought to the grindstone," and that the prospects of the British "were brightening in every direction."[38]

Towards the end of September he reported that "the whole country was quiet, and insisted that the Shah's force, aided by one European regiment at Kābul and another at Kandāhār, would be sufficient to keep the whole country in order." To him the very idea of British withdrawal from Afghānistān was an "unparalleled atrocity."[39]

But even the obtuse mind of Macnaghten could not ignore the importance of the ominous news that Muhammad Akbar Khan, son of Dost Muhammad, had advanced as far as Bamiyān. The rebels had now got the only thing wanting to them, namely, a trusted leader. Mohanlal, a confidential agent of Macnaghten, advised him to win over Akbar Khan by money. But Macnaghten thought it to be a wiser policy to distribute the money among the rebel chiefs. The greed and cupidity of the Afghān chiefs was only too well-known to the British, whose early successes in the war, up to the fall of Kābul, were almost entirely due to this lamentable weakness of Afghān character. Macnaghten, who was blissfully ignorant of the deeper causes which stirred the emotions of a whole people, naturally relied upon the means which had already proved so effective in

the earlier stages of the expedition. So he deputed Mohanlal to scatter, among the tribes, Rs. 50,000 in cash, as well as promises for more in future.

So far there was nothing out of the way, nor anything particularly dishonourable, in the conduct of the British. But Mohanlal had further secret instructions which reflect the highest discredit on the British, as a civilized nation of the West. He was asked to bribe the Shia chiefs to rise against the Sunnis: "You can promise", wrote Lt. Conolly to Mohanlal, "one lakh of Rupees to Khan Sherin on the condition of his killing and seizing the rebels." The letter, dated November 5, concluded with the following postscript: "I promise 10,000 Rupees for the head of each of the principal rebel chiefs". The amount was later increased to Rs. 15,000, and even the *modus operandi* of the assassination was freely discussed.[40]

This desperate and disreputable plan may be taken as a measure of the depth to which the prestige of the British and the reputation of their military had now sunk in Kābul. England thus descended to the level of one of the worst forms of oriental medieval despotism and savage diplomacy, which the Europeans are never tired of denouncing in the strongest terms.

After the disastrous and disgraceful defeat of the British forces at Behmaru on November 22 and 23, referred to above, the morale of the troops was utterly destroyed. It was the end of military operation. The military authorities seemed to be convinced that nothing more was to be gained by fighting. When, on the day following the second defeat, the rebels began to destroy the bridge which the British General, a short time before, had thrown on the Kābul river, "the military chiefs looked idly on" the operation carried on within the range of musket shot from the cantonments. Macnaghten recalled the troops under Sale from Gandammak, but learnt to his dismay that he had already left for Jalālābād. Macnaghten also tried to secure help from the Sikhs. But in the meantime the military authorities were clamouring for negotiations. Things came to such a strange pass that the civilian political agent, Sir William Macnaghten, was the only one to urge upon the military authorities to fight and make some demonstration worthy of their country, while the latter, in a body, were not less strenuous in urging him to commence negotiations with the rebels. Meanwhile the British troops suffered extreme privations. Temporary supplies were procured with great difficulty, and the prospect of starvation was ominously looming large. Complete demoralisation now pervaded the whole army and there was hardly any semblance of order and discipline. A plan was mooted for evacuating the cantonments which were exposed to

enemy attack on all sides, and removing to the citadel of Bala Hissār, but this measure, which might have saved the British, was not adopted.

On November 24, 1841, Macnaghten wrote to Elphinstone, the Commander of the British troops in Afghānistān, calling for his opinion as to whether, from a military point of view, it was feasible to maintain his position in the country. In reply the latter wrote to him on the same day that it was not feasible, and requested him to avail himself of the pacific overtures made by the enemy. Macnaghten thereupon had no other means left but to open negotiations. But the terms dictated by the Afghān deputation, which met him on November 25, amounting virtually to an unconditional surrender by the British as prisoners of war, were rejected by Macnaghten. He again urged Elphinstone to secure provisions by sending military expeditions to neighbouring villages. But the old general would not or could not do anything. At last, faced by immediate starvation, Macnaghten offered terms which were accepted by the Afghāns on December 11. According to these 'the British troops should evacuate the whole of Afghānistān and the Sirdars engaged that they would be unmolested on their journey, and receive all possible assistance in carriage and provisions; Shah Shuja would formally abdicate, and either remain in Afghānistān with a suitable allowance, or return to India with the British troops. For the due fulfilment of the conditions, four British officers will be left as hostages in Kābul.'

The Bala Hissār was evacuated by the British troops on December 13. But there was mutual distrust and the terms were not fulfilled. The British authorities asked for provisions which the Afghān chiefs had undertaken to supply. The latter asked the British, as a proof of their sincerity, to give up the different forts which they occupied in the neighbourhood of cantonments. To this the British agreed, and the forts were handed over to the Afghāns. Provisions, however, came in very slowly, and carriages were not sent at all by the Afghāns. Even the supplies that were sent were intercepted by the mob who committed all kinds of outrages.

The British force was now entirely at the mercy of the enemy who possessed the forts commanding the cantonments, in which all the troops had collected themselves. To add to the extreme difficulties caused by want of provisions and forage, a severe winter set in, causing a heavy fall of snow which covered the ground.

While the British were in such a hopeless situation and in a desperate mood, Macnaghten received a proposal from Akbar Khan, the son of Dost Muhammad, who was one of the most important

among the hostile chiefs. It was to the effect that Akbar Khan with the Ghilzai chiefs should join the British, that the British troops should continue in Afghānistān till the spring and then voluntarily withdraw, that Shah Shuja should retain his sovereignty with Akbar Khan as his *wazir*, and that the latter should receive a large pecuniary reward. Further, as a preparatory to all this, a joint attack should be made on Muhammad Khan's fort, and Aminullah Khan, a prominent chief, should be seized; it was even suggested that an assassin might be easily hired to kill him. The British envoy, Macnaghten, rejected the last part of the proposal, but otherwise accepted it, and even agreed to attend a conference held for the purpose of arranging the details. Accordingly, on December 23, 1841, Macnaghten, accompanied by three officers, proceeded to the place of conference near the British cantonment. But after the conference had begun, the envoy and his companions were suddenly seized from behind. He and one of the officers were immediately killed, and the two others were kept as prisoners.

A great deal of criticism has been made regarding the conduct of Macnaghten. There is no doubt that he fully realised the great danger in which he placed himself, but the motive which induced him to accept the proposal may be gathered from his statement that he would rather "suffer a hundred deaths than live the six last weeks over again." But while it may be conceded that he had to accept the proposal of the conference as there was no other means of escape from the hopeless situation, it may be justly argued that it was highly improper on his part to entrust himself to the enemies without any adequate protecting force. But it should be noted that the sixteen soldiers, who formed his guard, were at a little distance from the scene of the conference. They, however, ran away as soon as the danger arose, with the exception of one man, who was immediately cut down. Macnaghten's conduct has also been impugned on the ground that while one negotiation was actually concluded with the party, he should not have entered into a secret pact with Akbar Khan. But, it may be pointed out, the Afghān chiefs had failed to fulfil their part of the pledge by not supplying adequate provision, transport and other facilities, "and exacted from the British conditions after conditions not named in the treaty." It is to be considered whether, in these circumstances, Macnaghten was under any moral obligation to regard that treaty as binding and thus standing in the way of forming another agreement. But Macnaghten himself admitted his conduct to be a breach of faith.[41] The provision with regard to Aminulla Khan was highly objectionable as he was one of the confederate chiefs with whom the earlier treaty was concluded.

The tragic death of Macnaghten, far from rousing the spirit of the British for taking vengeance, rather seems to have paralysed their activities. They must have sunk to the lowest depths of infamy and degradation when they accepted the terms of a new treaty offered by the murderers of their envoy. In addition to the articles of the previous treaty, it contained four new ones, namely, (1) that the British should leave behind all the guns, except six, and all muskets and ordnance stores in the magazine; (2) they should give up all the coins in the public treasury; (3) all the spare muskets should be left behind, and (4) that the hostages already held by the Afghāns should be exchanged for married men with their wives and families. This was debated in the Council and, subject to the protest of a single member, it was resolved to accept all the demands. But as no married men agreed to offer themselves as hostages, the British General accepted the first three articles, and replied in a lofty tone that he "could not consent to an arrangement which would brand him with perpetual disgrace in his own country." He remitted the required amount, namely, 14 lakhs of rupees, by a bill on the Government of India, handed over the guns, wagons, small arms and ammunition, and also bound the Government to restore the deposed Amir. The Afghāns agreed to receive as hostages men instead of women, and these were accordingly sent.

It was arranged that the sick and the wounded in the British force were to be left behind, and they were accordingly conveyed to the Bala Hissār. The rest began their march towards India on January 6, 1842. There were about 4,500 fighting men and not less than 12,000 followers, besides women and children. As soon as this huge body left the cantonment, all order was lost and troops and camp-followers were hopelessly intermingled in one disorderly mass. It was found at night that the provision for encampment was hopelessly inefficient and they could not get either any shelter, fire or food. To make matters worse, one of the Shah's regiments disappeared and probably returned to Kābul. Numerous small groups of Afghāns. both horse and foot, were marching in a parallel line along the flanks of the British force, and it was believed that they formed the escort to be supplied by the chiefs in return for the amount of fourteen lakhs paid to them for this purpose. But it soon proved to be a mistake, for these Afghāns attacked the rear of the British army. Communications were now opened with Akbar Khan who happened to be near by, and he asked the British force to halt at But-Khak or Tezeem, until news was received of the evacuation of Jalālābād. But next morning, as the British force crossed the Khurd Kābul Pass, about five miles long and bounded on both sides by high hills, continuous fire was poured upon them by the Ghilzais

from the adjacent heights, in spite of the efforts of Akbar Khan to restrain them. This murderous fire caused havoc among the British forces, a number of whom deserted, and a larger number succumbed to the bullets or to the rigours of the climate and want of food. Nearly three thousand thus perished in the defile. Next, another proposal came from Akbar Khan to the effect, that the "ladies who accompanied the British force, with their husbands and children, should be placed under his protection." It was obvious that Akbar Khan wanted in an indirect way to achieve the object of taking ladies as hostages, which was previously declined. But the position of the British was such that the General now agreed to this proposition, and all married officers and ladies were sent with a body of Afghān troops who had been despatched by Akbar Khan to conduct them.

On the following morning (January 10, 1842) the rest of the army resumed their march to Jalālābād, and the cruel scenes of the previous day were repeated. The promised supply of food and fuel never came, and in the narrow portion of the Jagdullack Pass, heavy casualties were inflicted by the fire of the enemy from the heights. The narrow pass became literally choked with the dead. Many died and a large number fled for life. The enemy thereupon rushed down, sword in hand, slaughtered the men like sheep, and captured the treasure and baggage A large number of officers were killed, and only a small number of the advance party succeeded in escaping It is unnecessary to give further details of the march of the British troops, exposed as ever to the destructive fire of the enemy. It has been aptly remarked that under the murderous fire of the Ghilzais "the progress of the retiring party was a moving massacre." The British army had ceased to exist When the British force approached Gandammak they could muster only about twenty muskets. Only twelve officers and forty-five European soldiers rode on, but they were all massacred at Gandammak A few had managed to push on in advance of the column, but one by one they fell on the way, and only six reached Fatehābād, sixteen miles from Jalālābād. These six were at first received with professions of friendship by the inhabitants, and while they were engaged in partaking of the refreshments offered to them, the people armed themselves and rushed upon them Two were immediately cut down, and although the remaining four rode off, they were pursued, and three were slain before reaching Jalālābād The single survivor was Dr. Brydon, who reached that fort on January 13, 1842, to tell the tragic tale.

The situation at Kandāhār was much better than at Kābul. When a demand for assistance came from Kābul, a brigade under

Maclaren was ordered to march thither, but was compelled to return on account of severe winter. General Nott, the commander, refused to evacuate Kandāhār, though ordered to do so. Akbar Khan, after finishing his business at Kābul, proceeded to Kandāhār. The British now tried to win over the Afghān chiefs by grant of money, and a lakh of rupees was distributed among the chiefs, but though they took the money they joined Akbar Khan, and even a son of Shah Shuja joined this group. General Nott attacked the Afghāns on January 12, 1842, and defeated them, and thus saved the situation for the time being.

On March 7, he moved out of the city and drove the enemy from the neighbourhood. A detachment was sent from Sindh under Brigadier England to his relief, but he was signally defeated near Hykulzie in the valley of the Pishin, and fell back upon Quetta.

Jalālābād was still held by the English under Sir Robert Sale He had been asked, under the conditions of the treaty concluded at Kābul, to evacuate the fort and march back to India. Sale, however, refused to comply with this, though his position was very grave as he was short of men, money and provisions.

His difficulties were increased by a terrible earthquake on February 19, which destroyed the defensive works he had erected during the last three months. Akbar Khan seized this opportunity and advanced with his army within two miles of Jalālābād. After a number of skirmishes, Sale attacked the Afghān camp on April 7. Akbar Khan was decisively beaten and fled towards Laghman. This brilliant British victory saved Jalālābād. The Governor-General conferred on Sale's brigade the honourable title of the "Illustrious Garrison."

The news of the terrible disaster that befell the British on their way from Kābul to Jalālābād reached Auckland towards the end of January. His first feeling was one of astonishment, as he never could realise that the state of affairs in Afghānistān was really so bad. But soon he was seized with a feeling of panic or despair. He conceived the plan of abandoning Jalālābād and falling back upon Peshāwār, and even of retiring to Ferozepore. But the date of relinquishing his office was near at hand, and he did not like to take any decisive step which might embarrass his successor. Measures had been taken some time earlier to send a relief force to Jalālābād. Brigadier Wild proceeded with four regiments from Ferozepore, but when he reached Peshāwār, he found the Sikhs very lukewarm in their support. They at first agreed to accompany him as far as Āli Masjid, a strategic fort commanding the Khyber Pass, threatened

by the Afridis. But at the last moment the Sikhs refused and marched back upon Peshāwār.

To make matters worse, a sepoy battalion mutinied on January 10, "demanding increased allowances and coats and gloves before advancing through the cold to Kabul." Wild was ready to fire upon the mutineers and this might have created a terrible situation, "for there is little doubt that all the sepoys were equally averse to the advance." But the crisis was averted by the calmness and prudence of Henry Lawrence who pacified the sepoys.[42] Wild advanced to the Pass, but was decisively defeated on January 19, at the entrance of the Pass, as his sepoys had no heart in the fight. He fell back on Jamrud, and Āli Masjid fell into the hands of the Afghāns. A strong detachment was now sent under Pollock who reached Peshāwār on February 5. But on account of the sickness of a large number of troops, Pollock could not immediately advance, and halted at Peshāwār during the next two months. It was not till the beginning of April that he could commence his march through the Khyber Pass towards Jalālābād, and relieve that garrison on April 16.

In the midst of a gloomy situation Lord Auckland left India with a broken heart on March 12, 1842, and was succeeded by Lord Ellenborough who had reached Calcutta a few days earlier, on February 28. The new Governor-General did not take a long time to study the situation before he formulated his policy He realised that the war in Afghānistān "has assumed a religious, as well as national, character", and that "the possession of Afghānistān, could we recover it, would be a source of weakness, rather than of strength, in resisting the invasion of any army from the west." He therefore concluded that "the ground upon which the policy of the advance of our troops to that country mainly rested, has altogether ceased to exist". So far the views of His Lordship are quite precise and easily intelligible, and will probably command general approval. Equally clear is his general policy, resulting from this conclusion, namely, that the British army should evacuate that country, at the earliest possible date with due regard to the safety and security of the detached bodies of troops in different forts or in the field, but without any further concern about the fate of Shah Shuja. But what is not equally clear is whether the evacuation was to be preceded by any attempt to vindicate British honour and military prestige by inflicting a signal defeat upon the Afghāns In his despatch of March 15, he seems to attach much importance to this.[43] But in his letter to the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Jasper Nicolls, dated April 19, 1842, he expressed grave doubts whether it would be justifiable to undertake military operations "for no other object than that of

revenging our losses and of re-establishing in all its original brilliancy our military character".[44] He therefore issued specific orders to Pollock to withdraw all the forces in Upper Afghānistān to the Khyber Pass, and to Nott, to retire through Quetta and Sukkur in Sindh, with all the forces in Lower Afghānistān. But the Commander-in-Chief, as well as Nott and Pollock, the commanding officers, respectively, of Kandāhār and Jalālābād, all attached great importance to the point of regaining military prestige before leaving Afghānistān. For a long time the Governor-General stuck to his original plan, but at last yielded to the extent of giving Nott a discretionary power to "march through Ghazni and Kābul, over the scene of our late disasters".[45] While he appreciated fully the far-reaching effects of the successful execution of this march on India and the world at large, he took good care to point out the great risk involved in this course, for "failure in the attempt is certain and irretrievable ruin". Even after this grudging concession, he spoke of the movement on Kābul as an "adventurous march" and the tone of his letter to Nott, dated July 10, was "uniformly discouraging and disappointing."[46]

The letters which the Governor-General wrote to Nott and Pollock, on July 4, form a most curious episode in the whole affair. Reaffirming his fixed policy of withdrawing British troops from Afghānistān, "he suggested that perhaps General Nott might feel disposed to retire from Kandāhār to the provinces of India by the route of Ghazni, Kābul and Jalālābād, and that perhaps General Pollock might feel disposed to assist the retreat of the Kandāhār force by moving forward upon Kābul."[47] As has been pointed out, the wording was so chosen "as to cast upon them (the Generals) all the onus of failure, and to confer upon the Governor-General, or at least to divide with him, all the honour of success."[48]

Both Pollock and Nott, who were permitted, at their discretion, to vindicate the honour of the British arms, entered upon their task with full confidence. Pollock moved from Jalālābād on August 20, and defeated an enemy force three days later near Gandammak. After fighting his way through, and defeating numerous bodies of hostile Afghāns, he reached Kābul on September 15, and planted the British flag on the Bala Hissār.

General Nott sent a part of his force back to India by way of Quetta, and started with the rest, on August 9, towards Ghazni. He arrived on September 5 before that town, and during the night it was evacuated by the enemy. He destroyed the town, and in pursuance of the express instructions of the Governor-General he took away the gates of the tomb of Mahmūd of Ghazni "which are the

gates of the temple of Somnath."[49] On September 17 Nott joined Pollock at Kābul.

Saleh Muhammad Khan, who was in charge of the British prisoners at Bamiyān, now delivered them over to the British general on condition of receiving Rs. 20,000 in ready cash, and Rs. 1,000 per month for life.

The Supreme Government desired that some mark of the retributory visit of the British should be left upon the offending city. The great *bāzār* of Kābul was therefore destroyed as a reminder to the residents of the ills they had done to the British. A British historian has characterised it as "an inexcusable act of vandalism."[50] "Far worse was the deliberate sacking of Kābul, not in the heat of entry, but as a last minute policy "[51] "Guilty and innocent alike fell under the heavy hand of the lawless retribution . ... Many unoffending Hindoos, who, lulled into a sense of delusive security by the outward re-establishment of a government, had returned to the city and re-opened their shops, were now disastrously ruined. In the mad excitement of the hour, friend and foe were stricken down by the same unsparing hand "[52]

Shah Shuja ruled nominally in Kābul for some time after the departure of the British, but was murdered on April 5, and Fath Jung, his second son, was raised to the throne He had, however, no power and was merely a tool in the hands of Akbar Khan who wielded the real authority. As soon as Pollock began his march from Jalālābād, Fath Jung fled from Kābul and surrendered to Pollock on September 1. He formally abdicated, and prince Shapur, another son of Shah Shuja, was declared king. The armies of Pollock and Nott then returned through the Khyber Pass, having destroyed the defences of Jalālābād and Āli Masjid on their way. They had a magnificent reception from the Governor-General in person at Ferozepur in December, 1842 They fully deserved it, for the credit of rehabilitating the honour and prestige of England really, and almost entirely, belongs to them.

On October 1, 1842, Lord Ellenborough issued a proclamation at Simla,[53] reviewing the whole course of the Afghān war and pointing out the faults committed in course of it. This annoyed Lord Auckland who openly said in a party of friends that "he had been convinced that Lord Ellenborough was mad from the moment of his landing."[54] A grandiloquent passage refers to the recovery of the gates of Somnath, by which "the insult of eight hundred years was avenged" Many people have expressed doubts whether these wooden gates, now preserved as a lumber in the Agra fort, really belonged to the temple of Somnath.

The most important part of the proclamation was the enunciation of the future Afghān policy. Ellenborough declared that his Government "would willingly recognise any government approved by the Afghans themselves, which should appear desirous and capable of maintaining friendly relations with neighbouring states." A practical demonstration of this policy was not long delayed. The Afghān prisoners in India, including Dost Muhammad, were permitted to return to Afghānistān, and when he occupied the throne of Kābul in 1843 after Shapur had fled to Peshāwār, the British Government recognised him as the rightful king.

The curtain thus fell on an ill-fated expedition which brought the greatest calamity and disgrace to Englishmen in the whole course of their history in India. On the inexpediency of the great undertaking there is a general agreement of views. On the wisdom of the policy which originated it, opinion is sharply divided. The imperialist school viewed it as a well-conceived plan to safeguard the vital interests of India from Russian aggression, which was regarded at the time as almost inevitable and imminent. The lapse of a century has considerably modified this view, and doubts are now genuinely felt whether the Russian fear was not considerably exaggerated. It is now maintained by many that Afghānistān, left as it was, would have proved a far more formidable barrier to foreign aggression, as it has actually proved ever since, and more so at that time, as the territories of Ranjit Singh intervened between that kingdom and the British dominion. On the moral justice of the measures pursued, something has been said above. Any impartial observer would denounce the idea of ruining a neighbour, who has done no harm, merely to safeguard one's own interests, however necessary such a step might appear in the eyes of the aggressor.

The British historians are almost unanimous in attributing the disaster to the incompetence of men entrusted with the execution of the plan, in particular the old general Elphinstone and his coadjutors That they were primarily responsible for the tragic end, admits of no doubt. But there were other factors, too, which should not be ignored. Sufficient account has not been taken of the fighting qualities of the Afghāns, and the courage and tenacity with which they fought for the defence of their motherland against foreign aggressions. The rousing of a national spirit in Afghānistān,—of which we find a tardy recognition by British rulers after the tragedy—was an important factor in the discomfiture of the British arms. To the same end worked another important factor which has been completely ignored, so far, alike by statesmen and historians. This was the repugnance of the Indian soldiers to the military campaign in

Afghānistān. This point was briefly but very lucidly brought out in a memorandum prepared by Shaikh Hidayat Ali, a native military Officer, on the causes of the Sepoy Mutiny, and submitted to the Government of India on August 7, 1858.[55]

It is not difficult to imagine the consequences of a contest in which the wild, fierce and warlike, sturdy Afghāns, fired by a genuine national spirit, were opposed to a body of grumbling, down-hearted, and discontented sepoys suffering from rigours of climate and insufficiency of food, and fighting under conditions which they disliked on moral and religious grounds. The repeated tales of cowardice, indiscipline, and treason displayed by the sepoys on various occasions during this campaign may be explained to a large extent by the observations of the Indian military officer mentioned above In any case this is an important factor which, as he remarked, was big with future consequences, and must be taken into serious consideration in any review of the First Afghān War.

1 Thornton, VI. 117-22
1a See above, p 3.
2. Kaye-II, Vol. I, p 9
3. Thornton, VI. 103-4
4 One clause of the agreement between Shah Shuja and the Amirs, to which great significance was attached at a later date, ran as follows "That the Shah should give up Shikarpur to the Amirs for an annual tribute of six lakhs of rupees on the condition that if he conquered Afghanistan they would continue to pay him a tribute of seven lakhs of rupees yearly, but should he fail in doing so, the first six lakhs should be considered as a donation from them, and that they would not give him a farthing after that" As the Shah failed to conquer Afghānistān, he had no right or pretence to demand anything more from the Amirs, and this release of the Amirs from obligation to any further payment was written on the pages of a copy of the Qur'ān. For the text of the clause, see Wade to Government, 1st April, 1834, Punjab Government Records, Book 140, L 25, quoted in Khera, 45, f n 16
5 *CHBFP*, II 203
6. Kaye-II, I 197-8; the letter is quoted in *CHBFP*, II 204
7 Kaye-I, I. 305.
8. *CHI*, V. 491.
9 *CHI*, V. 492-3
10. Kaye-II, I 205.
11 *CHBFP*, II 205.
12. For a correct version of the negotiations between Burnes and the Amir, cf. Kaye-II, I 198 ff. Kaye has justly expressed "abhorrence of this system of garbling the official correspondence of public men—sending the letters of a statesman or diplomatist into the world mutilated, emasculated—the very pith and substance of them cut out by the unsparing hand of the state-anatomist" (ibid, 203).
13 *CHBFP*, II 205
14. This is clearly proved by the correspondence of Vitkevitch himself (quoted in Kaye-II, I. 204)
15. Kaye, op. cit., 204.
16 Ibid, 208.
17. Thornton (VI. 157 ff.), has given a summary. For the full text, cf. Kaye, op cit, 369 ff.
18. Kaye, op. cit., 375.
19. Ibid, 369.
20. Ibid, 382.
21 Ibid, 383.

22. *CHBFP*, II 208.
23. *CHI*, V. 499.
24. The account of the campaign, unless otherwise stated, is based on Kaye-II.
25 See Ch. VIII
26. See above, f.n, 4.
27 Thornton, VI. 197-8.
28 Kaye, op. cit, 479.
29 Ibid, 469, footnote.
30. *CHI*, V. 502 The action has been severely condemned by Kaye (op. cit Vol. II, 29-31).
31. Kaye, op cit., 98
32 Ibid, 146
33. Ibid, 166-8
34. R. C. Majumdar, *The Sepoy Mutiny and the Revolt of 1857*, p 246.
35 Kaye, op. cit., 143-4. For details of this and other causes of insurrection in Kābul, cf Mohan Lal's statement, *PIHC*, III. pp. 1395 ff.
36 *CHI*, V. 507.
37. *CHI*, V 508.
38 Kaye, op cit, 144
39 Ibid, 150
40 Ibid, 202-3, 218 ff
41 Ibid, 312-3 As Kaye justly points out, Macnaghten might have broken off the engagement with the confederate chiefs on the ground that they had failed to fulfil their part, "but until such a declaration was made, he was not at liberty to enter secretly into any new negotiations practically annulling the old" (ibid, 313)
42 *THG*, 350 (312) (The figure within bracket refers to page number of reprint in 1958)
43 *CHI*, V 513
44 Thornton, VI 349
45 Ibid, 367
46 Ibid
47 Kaye-II, III 286.
48 Ibid, 288
49 Ibid, 337 This belief is, however, entirely erroneous.
50 P E Roberts, *History of British India* (Oxford, 1938), p. 324
51 *THG* 351 (313)
52 Kaye, op cit, 369
53 Ibid, 376 ff
54 "One rumour, apparently emanating from Lord Auckland's sister, was that he (Ellenborough) was mad". (Imlah, 209).
55 See above, p 187 and f n, 34.

CHAPTER VIII

SINDH

At the end of the eighteenth century Sindh, nominally a part of the Durani kingdom in Afghānistān, was ruled by a Baluchi tribe called Talpuris who had ousted the Kaloras in 1783. There were at first four, but later three, distinct ruling families, one in Upper Sindh with Khairpur as capital, another in Lower Sindh with Hyderābād as capital, and the third with its capital at Mirpur, to the north-east of the last named city. The rulers, known as Amirs, were practically independent, though a position of supremacy was claimed by, and conceded in theory to, the Hyderābād family. Each Amir, again, was, under a long-standing convention, bound to consult the members of his family on all important matters. The succession to "the turban", i.e., headship, also generally passed to the brother rather than the son of the ruling chief. The domains of the Amirs extended up to the border of Cutch, and thus reached the frontier of British territory in India They also included Karachi, the well-known port, Shikarpur, an important centre of trade with the West, and the fortress of Gukkur, which stands on a rock in the middle of the bed of the Sindhu and thus completely commands the navigation of that river.

The importance of the Sindhu as a channel for commerce was realised by the British East India Company from the very beginning. They obtained a *firman* from the Mughul Emperor in 1630 for trade in Sindh, and established factories. But the relations, commercial or otherwise, between the two did not assume any importance till the end of the eighteenth century. Then the rumours of Napoleon's invasion of India gave Sindh a political importance leading to the treaty of 1809, by which the Amirs of Sindh agreed that they would "not allow the establishment of the tribe of the French in Sindh." The treaty was renewed in 1820 by which the Amirs engaged "not to permit any European or American to settle in their dominions."

In the meantime the rapid conquests of Ranjit Singh brought his dominions to the frontier of Sindh, and he had aggressive designs against that country. Between A.D. 1823 and 1825 he made elaborate preparations, but could not successfully carry out his design for reasons stated elsewhere.[1] At that time the British Government did not take any special interest in Sindh. But the fear of Russian *cum* Persian advance to the Sindhu, which ultimately led to the

Afghān War of 1839,[2] had also invested Sindh with a great political importance, as the route from Kandāhār via Quetta and the Bolan Pass to India passed through the territories of the Amirs.

The first concrete measure of political intercourse was taken in 1831 when Sir Alexander Burnes was sent to explore the possibilities of the navigation of the river Sindhu. The pretence was afforded by a desire to convey by water some horses which were presented by King William IV to Ranjit Singh. The Amirs of Sindh naturally looked upon the move with suspicion and refused the passage to Burnes. But they had to give way when Ranjit Singh remonstrated with them, for they were mightily afraid of a Sikh invasion of their territory. So Burnes was allowed to proceed to Lahore. But the natural instincts of the people of Sindh told them that this was the beginning of the end. A Baluchi soldier told Burnes: "The mischief is done, you have seen our country". One Sindhi exclaimed: "Alas! Sindh is now gone, since the English have seen the river, which is the high road to its conquest."[3] These words proved prophetic.

The report drawn up by Burnes emphasised the great facility afforded by the Sindhu river for the transport of the commerce coming by sea, as well as by land route, via Herāt, Kandāhār and Quetta to Shikārpur in Sindh which was then a great emporium of trade. So Lt. Col. Pottinger, the British Resident in Cutch, was directed to open negotiations with Sindh for the conclusion of a commercial treaty.

Pottinger went to Sindh in February, but the Amirs grew suspicious as to the ulterior designs of the British, and regarded the proposed commercial treaty as merely a cloak for gaining political supremacy. That the Amirs were not very wrong in their surmise is clearly proved by the following extract from a letter written to Pottinger by the Government of India.

"The Secret Committee of the Court of Directors have expressed great anxiety to obtain the free navigation of the Indus with a view to the advantages that must result from substituting our influence for that derived by Russia through her commercial intercourse with Bokhara and the countries lying between Hindustan and the Caspian Sea, as well as because of the great facilities afforded by this river for the disposal of the produce and manufacture of the British dominions both in Europe and in India."[4]

This clearly shows that the so-called commercial treaty had an ulterior political motive, and was mainly due to Russophobia which inspired the Indian foreign policy in regard to Western and Central Asia.

The Amirs of Sindh tried their very best to avoid the treaty. They even sought the help of Shah Shuja on the one hand and the Barakzai rulers of Kābul on the other "to avert the threatened invasion of the English."[5] But nothing availed, and the Amirs of Hyderābād and Khairpur had to conclude a new treaty in 1832 by which they allowed the British subjects to use the roads and the river Sindhu on the following conditions.[6]

(1) That no person shall bring any description of military stores by the above river or roads.

(2) That no armed vessels or boats shall come by the said river.

(3) That no English merchants shall be allowed to settle in Sindh.

Ranjit Singh naturally looked upon this treaty as the first step taken by the British to thwart his designs upon Sindh. So he decided to precipitate matters before the British influence was deeply rooted in Sindh. He found a pretext in the predatory raid of the Mazaris who lived a few miles to the south-west of Mithānkot and were nominally subjects of Sindh. In 1836 he moved troops towards Sindh and captured Rojhan, the seat of the Mazari Chief, but at the same time he was unwilling to carry matters to the extreme without ascertaining the attitude of the English towards this aggressive step. He had not to wait long He had asked for permission to import firearms by way of the Sindhu. The Governor-General refused it on the ground that it would be a clear infringement of the treaty of 1832. Ranjit Singh was further informed that his designs on Sindh would endanger peace which was necessary for the promotion of trade and navigation on the Sindhu river.[7]

As mentioned above, the Amirs of Sindh had invited Shah Shuja to save them from the British. It is probable that Ranjit Singh wanted to forestall any movement on the part of Shah Shuja to establish his authority in Sindh. But the British authorities looked with equal disfavour upon the designs of both. So Shah Shuja was informed that "should he leave Ludhiana without the express sanction of the Government, he would no longer be allowed an asylum within the British territories and the maintenance allowance to him and his family would be discontinued."[8] This threat was enough to stop any movement on his part.

Unfortunately the Amirs of Sindh could not possibly realise, and certainly did not know, that the attitude of the British had restrained Ranjit Singh's aggressive attitude towards them. But the British fully exploited the situation to their advantage. The Government of India wrote to the Secret Committee on 28th Novem-

ber, 1836: "We considered it our duty to endeavour to induce the Maharajah to lay aside his hostile intentions. It appeared to us, also, that this opportunity ought not to be neglected, of establishing the British influence on a solid basis in Sindh, a country which is of great importance to us both from its commanding the entrance to the Indus and from its position in reference to the Punjab and Afghanistan."[9] Lord Auckland therefore instructed Pottinger, Agent for the affairs of Sindh, to intimate to the Amirs that in the very dangerous position in which they then stood they could only be saved by the mediation of the British. The Amirs were therefore "promised the protection of the Anglo-Indian Government against the Sikhs, in consideration of which, it was hoped, they would receive, and themselves pay, a British force to be stationed in their capital."[10]

But even in spite of the imminent danger which seemed to threaten them, the Amirs were unwilling to accept these terms. Protracted negotiations followed and the terms were modified by omitting the provision for stationing troops at the capital city of Sindh. But even then the Amirs did not agree until significant hints were given "that Ranjit Singh would be let loose, if not aided, to work his pleasure in Sindh."[11] By the treaty, concluded in April, 1838, the British Government engaged to use their good offices to adjust the present differences between the Amirs of Sindh and Ranjit Singh. It was further agreed that an accredited British minister would reside at the court of Hyderābād and be empowered to move all over Sindh, attended by such an escort as may be deemed suitable by the British Government.[12]

A contemporary British historian has partially justified the British policy by an observation which, however unpalatable, undoubtedly represents the truth. "Disinterested friendship between nations," says he, "is not to be expected; and when it is professed, the profession is an emanation of pure hypocrisy." On this plea he supports the British demand for the presence of a British agent in Sindh. But he has the candour to admit that "the desire to reduce Sindh to the condition of a subsidiary state ought to have found no place in British counsels."[13]

But the treaty deserves severe condemnation on moral grounds. It is worthy of note that the British Government knew full well that Ranjit Singh would not invade Sindh in opposition to their wishes, and Lord Auckland declared this to be his conviction arising from long experience.[14] Yet he did not scruple to hold out this bogey to the Amirs of Sindh to wring out concessions from them which would virtually mean their political extinction. Even the modified terms

embodied in the treaty openly encroached upon the independence of the Amirs.

The free movement of a British agent all over Sindh with an army of unspecified strength "placed a loaded shell in the palace of the Amirs to explode" at the pleasure of the Governor-General. It was clearly an unjust and oppressive action against the Amirs for whom the British professed great friendship and who had not done the least harm to them. The irony of the situation is that a short while ago the British had dissuaded Ranjit Singh from aggression against Sindh by an array of facts and reasoning all of which were trampled under foot when they themselves chose to follow the same aggressive policy. The quick change in the attitude of British Government towards Sindh is also worthy of note. In 1831 the Amirs themselves had asked for British protection against Ranjit, but it was refused by Bentinck. Five years later Auckland strained his utmost to bring Sindh into the orbit of British protection.

But the worst was yet to come. This followed from the Tripartite Treaty, between Ranjit Singh, Shah Shuja and the British in 1838, to which reference has been made above.[16] As noted above, it was decided between the three parties that the Amirs of Sindh would be made to pay to Shah Shuja a sum of money as may be determined under the mediation of the British Government. It was at first fixed at twenty lakhs and then raised to twenty-five lakhs of Rupees. It was also agreed that the troops of the British and Shah Shuja were to pass through their territories. All this was done without the consent or even knowledge of the Amirs, though both were in clear violation of the pledges given to them.

As regards the payment, it was a legacy of old days when Sindh was part of the Durani kingdom. But the tribute was never paid except when the ruler of Kābul was strong enough to enforce payment. At the time of which we are speaking, the Amirs were in no mood to pay anything, and Shah Shuja could not compel them to pay without the aid of his British ally. It is also doubtful if Shah Shuja, himself a fugitive from Kābul, had any legitimate claim upon what was, even by fiction, the arrears of tribute due to Kābul. Besides, the Amirs pointed out that, when in 1834 Shah Shuja attempted to capture Kābul, he entered into an agreement with the Amirs by which, among other things, they were exempted from all further payment to Shah Shuja. In support of this the Amirs produced releases from obligations to further payment which were written in the Qur'ān and signed by Shah Shuja.[16]

The British Resident at Sindh candidly confessed, "how this (release) is to be got over, I do not myself see."[17] But his master

was less troubled by such inconvenient moral considerations. "The Governor-General is of opinion that it is not incumbent on the British Government to enter into any formal investigation of the plea adduced by the Amirs."[18] This must be regarded as one of the most extraordinary pronouncements even in the annals of the British relation with Sindh. A contemporary British historian has very rightly observed: "The position that the British Government was not bound to investigate the subject was certainly most extraordinary. A party claims from another a large sum—a third party, without consulting the reputed debtor, undertakes to compromise the matter, and to determine how much shall be paid—the alleged debtor denies that anything is due, and produces a release from the creditor—the arbitrator, thereupon, declares that it is not incumbent on him to inquire into the plea. Would such a course be considered just in any private transaction? And if not, can it be reconciled with any honest principles of public morality? The truth is, that money was wanted; the Amirs were looked to for a supply, and it was inconvenient to enter upon any inquiry as to whether they could justly be required to furnish it or not."[19]

If the forced payment by the Amirs was opposed to both legal and moral principles, the free passage of troops through Sindh was a clear violation of the treaty of 1832, which expressly forbade the transport of arms by the river or roads in Sindh. As pointed out above, the British quoted this provision of the treaty when, as recently as 1836, they prevented Ranjit Singh from importing arms through the Sindhu river.

But Lord Auckland did not scruple in the least to violate either clear legal and moral principles or express provisions of a treaty. He bluntly told the Amirs that the provisions of the old treaties should be suspended in favour of the proposed expedition through Sindh, and they must be prepared to make such other concessions as may be necessary for the successful execution of the military operation against Afghānistān—a country against whose Government they had no complaint and with which they were on friendly relations. Lord Auckland made it quite clear that the British Government lacked neither resources nor the will to use them against the Amirs if they dared oppose the measures deemed necessary by him.

The Amirs had, of course, to yield to the logic of the strong towards the weak. A treaty was concluded with the Khairpur State on December 24, 1838, and ratified by the Governor-General on January 10, 1839, by which it became a protected State acting in subordinate co-operation with the British Government and acknow-

ledging its supremacy. The Amir agreed to furnish troops according to his means at the requisition of the British Government, and render it all kinds of aid during the continuance of the war. A supplementary article was added by which in return for protecting the State and not coveting any portion of its possessions, the British were authorised to occupy the fortress of Bukkur.[20] 'A right to territorial gain for non-covetousness' is perhaps a new conception even in the British diplomacy in India.

The Amir offered to cede some other fortress instead of Bukkur. But Burnes "asked a plain question and wanted a plain answer. Would Rustum sign the treaty or not? Yes or No? No higgling."[21] The poor Amir had to say "yes."

The Amirs of Hyderābād in Lower Sindh were tougher customers, and would not agree to receive a subsidiary force. The result was a foregone conclusion. It was alleged that their men had plundered the stores collected at Hyderābād for the British army, and the British agent, therefore, wanted to teach them a lesson. He proclaimed that "nothing on the record of Indian History will be more justified than our bringing these men to reason." So, Sir John Keane, the British Commander of the expedition, led in person a military expedition against Hyderābād, and other forces, sent from Bombay to his aid, captured Karachi.[22] This brought "reason" to the recalcitrant Amirs who signed a treaty on February 3, 1839, surrendering Karachi (fort and town), and another on March 11, 1839, agreeing to receive a subsidiary force, not exceeding 5,000 men, and pay three lakhs yearly for its maintenance.[23] To this Lord Auckland added another clause, namely, that Karachi was to continue in the occupation of the British troops.[24] It was added without the knowledge or consent of the Amirs who had merely to accept it. Even the annals of the British in India contain few parallels to this high-handed act of injustice.

By this treaty Lower Sindh, like Upper Sindh, was placed under British protection. By a clever ingenuity this treaty was separately made with the four chiefs of Lower Sindh, disputes between whom were to be referred to the Resident for mediation. A similar treaty was made with the Amir of Mirpur, which was ratified in July, 1841.

As a result of these treaties the confederacy of the Amirs was virtually dissolved, the navigation of the Sindhu was rendered free of all tolls, and, to guarantee all this, a British force was to be maintained to the west of the Sindhu. But the most important consequence may be described in the words of Auckland: "Sindh is placed formally under British protection and brought within the circle of

our Indian relations." This painful episode, so discreditable to the British authority, both in India and England,[25] may be fittingly concluded with the following ejaculation of Auckland:

"These are objects of high undoubted value, and especially so when acquired without bloodshed, as the *first advance towards that consolidation of our influence,* and extension of the general benefits of commerce, *throughout Afghānistān,* which form *the great end of our designs.*" This was written on March 11, 1839, and the words, italicised by us, explain the real motive behind the nefarious transactions in Sindh.

We now come to the final act in the tragic drama, for which the stage was admirably set by Auckland in 1839. Nobody, familiar with the story of the expansion of British dominion in India, could doubt for a moment that the situation created by the treaties in 1839 would inevitably lead, sooner or later, to the annexation of Sindh by the British; only the process was hastened by the memorable events that took place in Afghānistān, as described above.

It has been justly observed that "the conquest of Sindh was not merely a sequence but a consequence of the Afghān War."[26] According to Napier, "it was the tail of the Afghān storm."[27] The British reverses in Afghānistān had undoubtedly a powerful effect on the affairs in Sindh. The Amirs, who received such unjust and humiliating treatment in the hands of the British, would naturally feel elated at their disgrace and discomfiture, and some chiefs of Sindh might even look upon the recent events as opening a faint prospect of recovering their lost power and prestige. They would be more or less than human beings if such thoughts did not surge in their minds. The British also, in their guilty conscience, could not but believe in the existence of such feelings, and would be naturally prone to exaggerate them and ascribe hostile motives to the Baluchis of Sindh on the most slender evidence. In any case their natural tendency would be to exaggerate, beyond all proportions, the importance or gravity of any act of hostility, real or imaginary, on the part of the Amirs of Sindh.

About this time, Nasir Khan was ruling at Hyderābād, Rustum Khan at Khairpur, and Sher Muhammad Khan at Mirpur. Lord Ellenborough started with a deep-rooted suspicion against them. One of his first acts was to write letters to the Amirs, of which the following extracts give a fair idea. "I will confide in your fidelity, and in your friendship until I have proof of your faithlessness and of your hostility in my hands; but be assured, if I should obtain such proof . . . sovereignty will have passed from you."[28]

These letters were sent to Major Outram, the Political Agent of Sindh and Baluchistān, to be handed over to those Amirs whom he "may have ground for suspecting of hostile designs". In a covering note he added "that the threat contained is no idle threat intended only to alarm, but a declaration of the Governor-General's fixed determination to punish, cost what it may, the first chief who shall prove faithless, by the confiscation of his dominions." In conclusion he added that action would be taken only on the "clear proof of such faithlessness."[29]

Major Outram, however, withheld the letters as he feared that the effects produced by them on the Amirs would be just the opposite of what was intended. Further, and this is more important, no overt act of hostility was as yet attributed to any of the Amirs.

Lord Ellenborough's attitude of announcing punishment for crimes which were yet non-existent or unknown, can be best explained by the general policy towards Sindh on which the Government of India and the Home Government were in perfect accord. In spite of their open professions that the occupation of strategic posts in Sindh was a purely defensive and temporary measure dictated by the necessities of the Afghān expedition, we find Auckland writing on January 8, 1840, that the Directors "attach with the Governor-General the utmost importance to the complete maintenance of the British superiority in Sindh and the navigation of the Indus not only during the occupation of Afghānistān but permanently."[30] The experience of the Afghān expedition undoubtedly proved the great strategic importance of Sindh and consequently the necessity of maintaining a strong position in that country. So Ellenborough's early despatches emphasise the need of the continued occupation of Karachi in order to communicate with Bombay, and of the occupation of Bukkur and Sukkur to ensure a passage over the Sindhu. Consequently he made the concrete proposal of inducing the Amirs to cede these territories in perpetuity in consideration of the remission of all tributes or pecuniary payments, including arrears Outram recommended the addition of Shikārpur to the list of territories to be ceded and informed the Governor-General that he would be justified in forcing a new treaty, embodying these terms, on the Amirs, on the evidence of their guilt collected by him. This evidence, diligently collected by him, was formulated in a series of ten indictments.[31]

Although Ellenborough did not agree to the inclusion of Shikārpur, he now desired to take two other districts and restore them to the faithful Nawab of Bahawālpur from whom they were wrested by the Amirs thirty years ago. But before any decisive step could

be taken, Major Outram was replaced by Sir Charles Napier, newly arrived from England, who was also to assume the chief military command. In September 1842, Ellenborough repeated to him the same instructions which he had sent to Outram four months ago, proving thereby that in spite of Outram's formidable array of charges against the Amirs, the Governor-General was not yet convinced of their faithlessness or hostile designs. This is further proved by the following passage in his letter to Napier.

"The Governor-General relies entirely on your sense of justice, and is convinced that whatever reports you may make upon the subject, after full investigation, will be such as he may safely act upon."[32]

Full responsibility being thus thrown upon Sir Charles Napier, he entered upon the task of collecting evidence and formulating his views upon the action to be taken in respect to Sindh. As he was more a soldier than a diplomat, he put forth his views very candidly in the elaborate reports he drew up on the subject. These may be summed up as follows:[33]

1. The procedure by which the English occupied Sindh might be dishonest, but that was not his concern. Nor was he prepared to condone the Amirs on the ground that the treaties, which they were guilty of violating, were unjustly forced upon them by most oppressive means. Both parties must stand by the terms of the treaty, which must be considered as "free expressions of the will of the contracting parties", particularly as "there does not appear any public protest registered against the treaties by the Amir."

2. The Amirs of Sindh are barbarous and debauchees, and their rule must be considered as a great curse upon the people of Sindh, who would be more happy and prosperous if their authority be replaced by that of the British.

3. The occupation of Shikārpur is absolutely necessary for the security of Sukkur and the commercial prosperity of the country. Therefore this must be added to the list of territories to be ceded by the Amirs as proposed by the Governor-General.

4. Several Amirs are guilty of violating treaties (and several concrete instances are cited in the *"Return of Complaint"* drawn up by him, to be referred to later).

The offences of the Amirs, so proved, may not be very serious or commensurate with the penalty proposed. "Their measures, hasty and violent, were adopted more in defence than offence, as thinking their dominions were to be wrested from them." "The Amirs are nervous, and these ebullitions are the result."

5. Nevertheless "the Amirs have broken treaties and have given a pretext" for justifying measures which are dictated alike by considerations of humanity and advantages of the British.

The more serious charges framed by Napier and accepted by the Governor-General may be briefly stated as follows:—.

1. Amir Rustum of Khairpur carried on secret intercourse with foreign States (particularly Panjāb) with designs hostile to the British, and his minister helped in the escape of Muhammad Sherif, who was seized in the act of organising a tribal rising against the British.

2. Amir Nasir of Hyderābād excited, by letter, Beebruck, the chief of the Bughtee tribe, to take up arms against the British troops when retreating from Afghānistān.

3. Rustum and Nasir contracted a secret alliance, offensive and defensive, against the British, and issued instructions to all their feudatory chiefs to be in readiness to take the field.

4. The Amirs levied tolls, which were in violation of article XI of the treaty.

The Amirs of Sindh admitted the last charge, but denied that it was a violation of the treaty. That their explanation might not fully justify, but certainly went a long way to excuse, their action, and attenuate their offence, was admitted by Napier himself

The other charges, the truth of which was categorically denied by the Amirs, but in respect of which the British, acting both as accuser and judge, gave a verdict without any regular trial or inquiry, did not amount to anything more than a hostile intention without leading to any overt act of hostility against the British.

One British historian refers to the charges as vague, "based on evidence now generally recognised to have been unsatisfactory". Another observes that the only serious item of the charge was a letter which, some good scholars considered, was probably a forgery, but which Napier, who had the advantage of total ignorance of any Indian language, decided was genuine.[34]

On the basis of the reports of Sir Charles Napier a new treaty was drawn up on 4 November, 1842, which took away from the Amirs the right of coinage, a privilege highly valued by them as the last emblem of their ruling powers, and forced them to cede in perpetuity, with necessary arrondissements, Karachi and Tatta in Lower Sindh, with right of free passage over the territories lying between them and Sukkur and Bukkur and Rohri in Upper Sindh. All the territories between Bahāwālpur and Rohri, possessed by

the Amirs, were transferred to the Nawab of the former place for his faithfulness to the British. In return for all these concessions the Amirs were exempted from the payment of tribute.[35]

The draft of the new treaty was sent to Hyderābād on December 2, 1842, and to Khairpur two days later. But on December 1, Napier issued a proclamation that he would immediately occupy the town of Rohri and the entire left bank of the Sindhu from that town to the frontier of Bahāwālpur. Having sent an army for the purpose, Napier himself marched on Khairpur and manoeuvred by threat of invasion to make Ali Murad, the brother of Rustum Khan, the chief of Khairpur, even before the death of the latter, for Ali Murad had agreed to cast in his lot with the British.

Rustum was forced to conclude an agreement, resigning the "turban" or sovereign powers to his brother, and ceding to him certain villages including Mathela.[36] This was a great provocation to the members of the family who had chosen Mir Muhammad Husham, the son of Rustum, as his successor. There is no doubt that Ali Murad was chosen on account of his loyalty and devotion to the British. In any case, by this master-stroke of diplomacy the whole of Upper Sindh, as Napier wrote on December 23, was perfectly settled without any fight As Rustum's family and many followers fled to Imāmgarh, a desert fortress, half way between Khairpur and Hyderābād, Napier marched against it. Although Rustum proved submissive and no resistance was offered when Napier reached Imāmgarh on January 12, the fortress was blown up. It is to be noted that Napier's proclamation was issued and subsequent hostile acts were done when negotiation with the Amirs was still going on. One need therefore hardly be surprised that though the Amirs had verbally agred to accept the new treaty, and a meeting was arranged at Khairpur on January 20 for settling details, only the vakils of Hyderābād were present.

Napier was convinced from some letters intercepted by him that the Amirs, bent upon war, were assembling troops for the purpose, and made preparations accordingly. Outram, who was now Commissioner in Sindh and conducting negotiations with the Amirs, held a different view. He arrived at Hyderābād on February 8, and got all the Amirs to sign the treaty excepting Nasir Khan of Khairpur, who was absent but promised his adherence. Outram wrote to Napier not to approach with his troops towards Hyderābād which had not a single armed man, and even suggested that he would come alone to that city. Napier, however, paid no heed to this, and continued his march. So the situation changed. On February 12,[36a] Outram was insulted in the street, and next day was warned by the

Amirs that a number of Baluchis had come to the city and could not be controlled by them (the Amirs). He was accordingly advised to quit Hyderābād, but he stayed on, and his residence was attacked by several thousand armed Baluchis. After a gallant resistance he escaped, embarked a steamer which lay on the river, and joined Napier who was then encamped at Hala, thirty miles north of Hyderābād.

Definite information having been obtained that the hostile troops numbering more than twenty thousand were assembled at Miani, Napier threw away all further considerations of negotiating with the Amirs. He marched with his army of 2,800 and defeated the enemy after a severely contested battle on February 17, 1843.

"The ferocity on both sides was unbounded, the carnage, terrible." "Thick as standing corn," the Baluchis clustered on both banks and shook their sharp swords while the "Irish soldiers met them with that queen of weapons, the musket". 'The British guns swept the river course diagonally, tearing the dense crowd with an appalling carnage." The casualties were 275 British and 6,000 Baluchis [37] Six of the Amirs now surrendered as prisoners of war and Hyderābād was occupied on the 20th. But Sher Muhammad of Mirpur, who still commanded a large force, defied the British. After some rest, and receiving reinforcements, Napier marched against him and defeated him at Dabo, six miles from Hyderābād, on March 24, 1843. It was "a repetition of the previous battle, the losses of both sides almost exactly as before." Mirpur was taken on March 27, and Amarkot fell shortly after. This ended the hostilities, at least for the time being. Already, on March 5, the annexation of Sindh had been virtually proclaimed by a notification, and it was now carried into effect by the formal appointment of Napier as Governor.

The whole of Sindh from Sukkur to the sea now formed part of British India, but Ali Murad was allowed to rule over Khairpur as a vassal chief on account of his faithful alliance with the British. The Amirs were deported but were later allowed to return, and granted pensions.

The troubles in Sindh were not, however, altogether over. Sher Muhammad of Mirpur, Rustum's son Husham, some other chiefs, and isolated groups of armed Baluchis made a last desperate struggle against the usurpers of their country, but as could be easily foreseen, they were all signally defeated. By the middle of June all open hostilities were at an end, and Sir Charles Napier, who was vested with almost absolute powers, devoted his attention to the

restoration of order and improvement in the administration of the newly conquered country.

Ali Murad, as mentioned above, had obtained certain villages by an agreement with his brother, Rustum. The terms were embodied in the Treaty of Naunahar which was written, as was the usual custom on the blank pages of a manuscript of the Holy Qur'ān. Murad substituted new pages which "altered the grant from the cession of a single village Mathela to that of three districts, namely, Mirpur, Mathela and Meharki." The forgery was suspected in 1848 and proved by a Commission of inquiry. The Court of Directors ordered in 1851 that "Mir Ali should not only surrender the possessions fraudulently acquired, but that he should forfeit the turban and title of Rais of Upper Sindh, and that his authority should be confined to the possessions inherited by him from his father Mir Sohrab of Khairpur".[38]

It is not necessary to dwell at length upon the British policy towards Sindh. It was characterised by coercion and injustice and there is a general consensus of opinion that the transactions of Auckland, Ellenborough, and Napier have left the blackest stain on the character of the British administration during the whole course of their history in India Indeed it would be difficult to name any other major political operation of the British in India—save the Afghān expedition of which it forms a part—on which the hostile judgment has been so definite and universal. An attempt was made at the time by interested parties to throw all the blame on Auckland and to represent Ellenborough and Napier as having merely continued a bad job to its bitter end. But at this distance of time, when it is possible to look upon the whole episode in a more detached spirit, it is impossible to subscribe to this view. That Ellenborough, in violation of justice and moral principles, followed a policy of shameful aggrandisement, to which he was by no means irrevocably committed by his predecessor, is now generally admitted. Although he managed to throw the entire responsibility for the final action on the shoulders of Napier, he must take his due share of it, because he was the head of the Government, and initiated a frankly hostile and aggressive policy before ascertaining whether it was justified by the conduct of the Amirs.[38a]

Sir Charles Napier must be principally held to blame for precipitating the war. He had begun military operations even while negotiations were proceeding, and did not cease them even when the Amirs, with a single exception, had signed the treaty. His only justification lay in the belief that the Amirs were not sincere in signing the treaty and really entertained hostile designs. This be-

lief, it is generally held, was vindicated by the subsequent conduct of the Amirs. But a little scrutiny would show that this view is not so obviously correct as it is generally supposed to be.

The two incidents which are regarded as proving the hostile designs of the Amirs were the attack on Outram's residence, and the assemblage of army at Miani by the Amirs. As regards the first, it is generally ignored that Outram's own account completely exonerates the Amirs from any responsibility in the matter. On December 12, while returning from the Durbar, where the Amirs had "signed and sealed the new treaty with all formalities," Outram was surrounded by an excited and infuriated crowd who "execrated the Amirs for their dastardly submission to what they styled robbery." The Amirs restrained the crowd at the Darbar and streets of the fort, but failed to do so in the city. But they did their utmost to check the crowd. Outram says "Had we not been guarded by a numerous body of horse, headed by some of the most influential Belooch Chiefs, I dare say the mob would have proceeded to violence; as it was, a stone was thrown, which struck Captain Wells." Outram gives full credit to the Amirs for the utmost exertion they displayed in protecting them, and his sincere belief in their innocence is proved by the fact that after narrating the incident, with full details, of the angry crowds, he requested Napier to "come down in the steamer and stop the troops."[39]

The above account is based on a letter written by Outram on December 13 On that very day "he wrote a second letter, saying the Amirs had just told him that the Balochis were uncontrollable; they have taken an oath to have 'yageo' (supposed to be vengeance) unless Rustum was righted. they would not obey the Amirs". "Armed men", he said, "were flocking into the city," at the same time "expressing his confidence that the Amirs were doing all they could to disperse the Balochis and send them out of Hyderabad."[40]

"At three o'clock on the 13th two deputies from the Amirs informed Outram that as he could give no pledge to restore Rustum (of Khairpur) to the turban (i e., Chiefship), all the Balochi Sirdars swore on the Quran to fight the British army, and not to sheathe the sword until they had restored him. They would march that night and the Amirs could no longer restrain them."

At ten o'clock at night Outram was informed that the Baluchis were to march the next morning to fall on the British army and the Residency was to be attacked in the night. Outram, however, regarded it as 'boast and vanity' and did not even take the precaution of plac-

ing a night sentinel on the house.[41] On the 14th the Amirs sent messengers to Major Outram, urging upon him to leave the place.

This circumstantial narrative of events from day to day makes a strong *prima facie* case in favour of the Amirs. They had kept Outram fully informed of the development of the situation until it culminated in an attack on the Residency and the flight of Outram, after a brave defence, as mentioned above. Whether all this was a mere duplicity on their part is a matter of opinion. But one thing is certain. At the time, Outram, who was in the best position to judge, had not only felt no distrust in the Amirs, but was convinced of their honesty. Napier, who was at a distance, and had already formed his own opinion of the hostile design of the Amirs, regarded their action as a mere camouflage to hide their evil designs.

On general grounds, therefore, there is nothing to justify the attitude which summarily dismisses the view of Outram and places implicit faith in that of Napier. That such an attitude has been almost universal is mainly due to the subsequent hostilities of the Amirs It is a common human failing to judge the previous conduct in the light of subsequent events, and *vice-versa*, without carefully considering whether there was any connection or causal relation between the two. As such the open hostility of the Amirs should also be carefully examined independently.

There is no doubt that Napier was determined upon war. He had begun hostilities by marching his troops in Upper Sindh while negotiations with the Amirs were still being conducted by Outram with every hope of success, at least according to the opinion of the latter. If Napier had no confidence in the judgement of the man whom he had himself appointed to conduct the negotiations, the more straightforward course would have been to break off all negotiations and declare war. But a very strange spectacle was witnessed in Sindh; the accredited agent was carrying on negotiations with the Amirs, while the General, who deputed him to negotiate, was in full march against them with his whole army. The absurdity of the situation was quite patent to all except Napier. The Amirs pointed it out and very cogently argued that unless the General should delay his march it would be impossible to restrain the Baluchi warriors. In vain did Outram send repeated requests to the General to stop his march towards Hyderābād, a step utterly inconsistent with an earnest desire to settle the matter by amicable means which prompted the negotiations still continuing. Even when the Amirs signed the treaty on the 12th, Napier did not halt the march of his troops. As his brother and great apologist observes. "He disregarded the signing of the treaty and looked upon it as a mockery."[42]

The fatal consequence of this policy, pursued by Napier in spite of strong remonstrances by Outram, has been described by the latter in a letter to his chief, dated December 12. Referring to the Amirs, Outram observes:

"These fools (?) are in the utmost alarm in consequence of the continued progress of your troops towards Hyderābād, notwithstanding their acceptance of the treaty, which they hoped would have caused you to stop. If you come beyond Halla, if so far, I fear they will be impelled by their fears to assemble their rabble, with a view to defend themselves and their families, in the idea that we are determined to destroy them, notwithstanding their submission I do hope, therefore, you may not consider it necessary to bring the troops any further in this direction; for I fear it may drive the Amirs to act contrary to your orders to disperse their troops, or rather not to assemble them, for they were all dispersed yesterday; and thus compel us to quarrel with them "[43]

As the apologist biographer puts it: "Sir Charles Napier's judgment was disturbed neither by the deceit of the Amirs, nor by the credulity of his Commissioner "[44] So he wrote in reply, on the 13th, that the object of the Amirs was now evident and consequently "he would march the next day."[45]

When the Baluchi chiefs of Sindh found that even the abject submission of the Amirs by formally accepting the treaty could not stop the military movements of the British, they naturally concluded that the British desired nothing less than their utter destruction. Is there anything to be wondered at that such a fear would seize them and lead to all the consequences as were predicted by Outram in the passage quoted above? According to Outram, even at this crisis, relying mainly upon his assurance, the Amirs tried their best to restrain the excited Baluchis, but failed. But even if we disbelieve this, and credit the Amirs themselves with a deliberate and determined policy to fight the English invaders, who continued to march in disregard of the provisions of the treaty they had just concluded, can we justly blame them for their action? Napier and his apologists justify his measures by the assemblage of troops at Miani, within six miles of Hyderābād. But it would surely be unreasonable to expect that while the British army was in full march to destroy the Amirs, they would not take the ordinary precaution of getting an army ready in the vicinity of their threatened capital. Did Napier really expect that the Amirs would send their army away and then stand before his soldiers with bare breasts to receive the bayonet charge of the English troops?

No unprejudiced man who carefully reads the events of those fateful days at the beginning of 1843 can possibly fail to carry away the impression that Napier was bent upon war. Even Outram condemned the British demands as tyrannical and the action of Napier as provocative. In February, 1843, he wrote to Napier that he was unable entirely to concur in his views either as respects the policy or justice of, at least so suddenly, overturning the patriarchal government to which alone Sindh had been accustomed .... "It grieves me to say that my heart, and the judgment God has given me, unite in condemning the measures we are carrying out for his Lordship as most tyrannical—positive robbery."[46] Fortunately, Napier has left us in no doubt as to the 'high principles' which dictated his policy. He was convinced that the barbarous, despotic, and tyrannical rule of the Amirs would sooner or later be replaced by the civilised administration of the British. He was therefore persuaded to believe that sooner he brings about such a consummation, to be devoutly wished for, the better for the British and the people of Sindh. A treaty would merely prolong the darkness of misery and misrule, while a war would hasten the dawn of the new era. So, humane considerations urged him on to a final decision by arms. Sir Charles Napier showed indomitable courage and great military skill in inflicting crushing defeats upon the host of Baluchis nearly ten times the number of his troops. But while he justly takes his rank as a great general, his political philosophy does him little credit. For the principles, so boldly laid down by him, would give a charter or free license to any people to bring under their domination those who are, or are believed by them to be, living under an inferior type of civilisation Such an idea, no doubt, has always existed, but it would be a bad day for humanity to elevate it into a high moral principle.

But one virtue must not be denied to Napier. He was brutally frank. He pithily noted in his journal: "We have no right to seize Scinde; yet we shall do so, and a very advantageous, useful, humane piece of rascality it would be."[47] It is impossible to improve upon this judgment of his own action by himself. It was graphically represented by the *Punch* when he was made to summarise his great exploit in only one word instead of three—*vini, vidi, vici*—used by Julius Caesar. That one word was '*peccavi*' (I have (Sind) sinned).[48] Since the days of the impeachment of Warren Hastings, no other action of a Governor-General was so severely condemned in England as the annexation of Sindh by Ellenborough. Ashley described it as a "criminal folly". The *Times* denounced it as "undisguised attempt at spoliation of the most daring kind", and asked, "can we be anything but ashamed?" The Court of Directors regarded it as "unjust and impolitic, and inconsistent with the true interests and

honour of the Indian Government." They threatened to recall the Governor-General, and but for the influence and persuasion of the Prime Minister, Sir Robert Peel, would have carried out the threat. But though Peel prevented them from going to this extremity for the time being, even the views of the British Cabinet reflected the prevailing temper of the English people. Their first reaction was one of irritation at being presented with so unreasonable a '*fait accompli*.' As the press fulminated against the annexation, they seriously considered the question of rescinding it. By July they reached a calmer attitude through a compromise They informed Ellenborough of their general disapproval, leaving discretion, for the moment, in the hands of the Governor-General in Council. The decision of the Council was, of course, a foregone conclusion. But as soon as the Governor-General in Council gave a decided opinion in favour of the annexation, the Cabinet confirmed the act. In support of the Cabinet it has been urged that they did this only because the lapse of time made the evils of revocation too serious to ignore.[49] But it is difficult to support the contention, for the serious consequences of revocation are by no means apparent, unless it be a false sense of prestige. In fairness to the Cabinet it should be mentioned that while formal resolution was passed by the House of Commons thanking Napier and his troops for their brilliant military exploits, Ellenborough's name was significantly omitted from the resolution. As to the English public a just appreciation of the situation is given by Trotter in the following words: "If Englishmen privately regretted the wrong done to the Amirs, they were none the less willing to stand upon the seeming advantage thereby won for themselves."[50]

The best historical comment on the whole episode is to be found in the *Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy:* "Then came the annexation of Sind. The story of that much discussed event might be taken for a lost chapter from *the Prince* of Machiavelli. No amount of sophistry can disprove the charge that Ellenborough was determined from the very beginning to carry through the project by fair means or foul, that the treaty engagements with the Talpur Amirs were cynically violated, and that the ensuing War was forced upon them. Opinion at home was prompt in denunciation. Mountstuart Elphinstone, the Nestor of Anglo-Indian politics at that time, gave the best of the many verdicts passed on the subject. 'Coming after Afghanistan, it (i.e., the annexation of Sindh) put one in mind of a bully who had been kicked in the streets and went home to beat his wife in revenge.' The act was solemnly condemned by the Court of Directors, and disapproved by the Cabinet. Nevertheless, there was no modification, much less any reversal, of the Governor-General's action."[51]

SINDH

1. See Ch. X.
2. See Ch. VII.
3. Napier, I. 38-9.
4. Khera, 15-6.
5 Ibid, 21.
6. Ibid, 69; Aitchison, VIII, 320.
7. Khera, 29.
8. Khera, 32.
9. Thornton, VI. 400.
10. Thornton, VI. 400; Napier, I. 44.
11. Napier, I. 48.
12. Khera, 71; Aitchison, VIII. 328.
13. Thornton, 402.
14. Napier, I. 49.
15. Ch VII
16. Khera, 45, fn. 16. For the exact terms cf Ch. VII, fn 4
17. Letter to the Secretary with Governor-General, October 25, 1838. Sind Papers p 80 (quoted in Thornton, VI 404).
18. Letter from the Secretary with Governor-General to Resident in Sind November 19, 1838. Sind Papers, p 117 (quoted in Thornton, VI. 404)
19 Thornton, VI. 404.
20 Khera, 74-5; Aitchison VIII, 328-30
21 Khera, 48.
22 Ibid
23 Khera, 76-8, Aitchison, VIII. 332-6.
24 Khera, 49
25 The Home authorities fully supported Auckland. The relevant letter will be quoted later in this Chapter
26 *Cambridge Modern History*, XI 736.
27 Napier, I. 111.
28 Ibid, 98
29. Ibid
30 *CHI* V 528 See fn. 25
31 Napier, I 103 ff.
32 Ibid, 113.
33 Ibid, 122 ff.
34 *THG*, 356 (317)
35 Aitchison, VIII. 339
36 For the controversy over this affair, cf. Thornton, VI 420-22. Thornton denounces the conduct of Napier
36a *CHI*, V 536. Napier II 279-83
37. Napier, II 311-2, *THG*, 357 (318)
38 Warner, I 289-90
38a For an elaborate defence of his policy by Ellenborough and its criticism cf, Thornton, VI 446-66.
39 Napier, II 279 ff.
40 Ibid, 283
41 Ibid, 288.
42 Ibid, 292
43 Ibid, 277.
44. Ibid, 282.
45. Ibid, 283.
46 James Outram, 316; quoted in *THG*, 355-6.
47. Napier, II. 203.
48. Imlah, A H., *Lord Ellenborough* (London, 1939), 218
49. Imlah, 216. "Mr Gladstone afterwards revealed that Sir Robert Peel's Cabinet, of which he and the Duke of Wellington were both members, disapproved, he believed unanimously, of the conquest But the ministry were powerless, inasmuch as the mischief of retaining was less than the mischief of abandoning it, and it remains an accomplished fact." *Contemporary Review*, November, 1876, quoted in THG, 358-9 (319-20).
50. Trotter, *History*, I. 41.
51. *CHBFP*, II. 211.

CHAPTER IX

ELLENBOROUGH AND SINDHIA

Reference has been made above to the treaty imposed upon Daulat Rao Sindhia by the British, in 1817, at the beginning of the Third Maratha War.[1] Although his prestige was humbled and his army reduced, the suppression of the Pindaris benefitted him by the peace, order, and tranquillity that now prevailed in his dominions The reduction in his military expenses, the rise in revenue by about 25 p.c., and a reduction of about 15 p.c in the expenses of its collection,—all combined to increase his material prosperity.[2]

Daulat Rao Sindhia died in March, 1827. His widow, Baiza Bai, was a scheming and intriguing woman, and her ambition was to rule the State for life. But she was prevailed upon by the British to adopt a son, in accordance with the wishes of her late husband. Accordingly, a boy of eleven, Jankoji Rao, was adopted by Baiza Bai, but she continued to govern the State as Regent. She seems to have been engaged in various plots in order to keep the absolute power in her own hands during her life, and was encouraged in furthering her plans as the British authorities declined to interfere in the internal affairs of the State Jankoji was virtually kept a prisoner in his palace. He, however, managed to escape to the Resident and reported that his life was in danger. When the Governor-General, Bentinck, paid a visit to Gwālior, he was approached by both parties. A definite decision on his part would have settled the dispute, but instead of that he gave Baiza Bai to understand that she might continue as Regent so long as she guaranteed the future rights of Jankoji, and told the latter that the British Government would prevent the Regent from doing anything prejudicial to his interests. This has been characterised by an eminent British historian as "an equivocal advice, which being interpreted by Baiza Bai to mean that she was, if possible, to keep her power, and by Jankoji that he was, if possible, to wrest it from her, rather hastened than protracted the crisis".[3] A section of the military now espoused the cause of Jankoji, and on 10 July, 1833, invested the palace Baiza Bai took to flight and ultimately agreed to retire on a pension. Jankoji concluded a new engagement with the British in 1837 by which he "engaged to defray all the charge of a force, to be commanded by British officers, and constantly stationed within His Highness' territories, for the protection thereof and the preservation of good order therein."[3a]

The advice given by Bentinck, bearing on its face marks of deliberate duplicity, may appear to be somewhat strange, but seems to have been part of a deep-laid conspiracy, if we can trust the accounts of Mr. John Hope, who once held the post of Superintending Surgeon of Sindhia's Contingent, and Surgeon to the Court of Gwālior. According to him, the Council in Calcutta was anxious to profit by the troubles in Sindhia's Court. Accordingly, "a demi-official letter was written to the Resident by the Chief Secretary of the Foreign Department, desiring him to learn at a private interview, by way of a feeler, if the Maharaja, encircled as he was by serious troubles,—troubles mainly caused by our Government—would like to resign, assigning over the country to the British Government and receiving a handsome pension, which would be paid out of his own revenues." The Resident declined to make the suggestion and thus, as the Deputy-Secretary of the Foreign Department admonished him, "allowed a favourable chance to escape of connecting the Agra to the Bombay Presidency". The Resident, Cavendish, was, of course, removed, and when his successor, Major Sutherland, waited on the Governor-General for instructions about the policy to be pursued in Gwālior, Bentinck "opened wide his mouth and placed his thumb and finger together like a boy about to swallow a sugar-plum. Then turning to the astonished Major, he said: "If the Gwālior State *will* fall down your throat, you are not to shut it, as Mr. Cavendish did, but swallow it; that is my policy."[4]

The desired opportunity of swallowing Gwālior was not long in coming. On 7 February, 1843, Jankoji Rao Sindhia died, without leaving any son and without making any adoption. His widow, about 11 years old,[5] adopted, with the full concurrence of the Chiefs and influential persons, a boy of eight, who assumed the name Jayaji Rao, and was placed on the throne without any difficulty or opposition from any quarter. As the Queen-mother was too young to act effectively as Regent, it was necessary to vest some person with real authority to carry on the administration.

This matter was very much complicated by the keen personal interest which the Governor-General evinced in the affairs of Gwālior. As soon as Lord Ellenborough heard of the death of Jankoji Sindhia, he cancelled his visit to Meerut and proceeded to Agra "in order to be near Gwālior." It is very curious that although he admits in a letter, written to Queen Victoria on 19 February, that "hitherto everything has been conducted at Gwālior peaceably and properly," he assumed that "for some time there must be a difficulty in carrying on any new administration" and therefore "the necessity

might possibly arise for instant intervention." Accordingly, he "made some change in the disposition of the regiments in order to have with him old corps upon which he can entirely depend."[6]

All this lends some colour to the view, openly expressed by John Hope, mentioned above, that Ellenborough decided to take advantage of Jankoji's death and the succession of a minor, under a minor Queen-mother, to deprive the State of Gwālior of its independence, and further resolved that "the preliminary step would necessarily be to set aside the Maharani on the ground of her infancy and put up in her place as Regent a person who would cheerfully do the bidding of the British Government."[7]

There is no positive evidence to prove such diabolical design on the part of the Governor-General, but his action undoubtedly followed the line of policy indicated in the above passage There were two candidates for the office of the Regent. According to John Hope, the Gwālior *Darbār*, if left to itself, would have chosen Dada Khasjiwalla, but through the intervention of the Governor-General, Mama Saheb, a maternal uncle of Jankoji Sindhia, was appointed to the office, "being the one individual in that Council who would lend himself to carry out an anti-national policy" of supporting the designs of the British.[8] Hope's estimate of the policy and character of Mama Saheb is corroborated by the Resident himself who, in recommending him for the post of Regent, remarked that "he seems to be attached to our interests."[9] In any case, there is no doubt that the Mama Saheb owed his appointment to the influence and active interference of the British. In a letter to Queen Victoria, dated 21 March, 1843, Ellenborough writes that his movement to Agra "had the desired effect of establishing without contest a strong Government at Gwālior in the person of Mama Saheb, who feels that the support which has been given to him by the British representative has practically given to him the regency "[10] It is to be noted that such an active interference in the internal affairs of Gwālior was not sanctioned by any treaty rights nor justified by any circumstance known to us It proceeded from the pretensions and prerogatives of a paramount power and was dictated by the well-known British policy not to tolerate able men, but to appoint stooges at the helm of affairs in a Native State.

The newly appointed Regent, Mama Saheb, being extremely unpopular, evidently attempted to strengthen his influence by effecting a marriage between his niece (a child of six years of age) and the Maharaja (who was nine), and the Tika ceremony actually took place on 19 May, 1843. On May 21, the young Queen-mother wrote to the British Resident "complaining of the conduct of the Regent,

and expressing a desire for his removal." There is no doubt that she was prevailed upon to take this action by the chiefs of the Gwālior *Darbār*.[11] Lord Ellenborough says, in a letter to Queen Victoria, dated 8 June, 1843, that all the chiefs joined the faction hostile to the Regent.[12] In plain words it means that there were really no factions, as suggested, but all the chiefs unanimously requested the Queen-mother to take the action. It has been urged by the British authorities that the Queen-mother at first gave her consent to the marriage or seemed to have done so, and was made to realise later, by the other chiefs, the grave danger "that the Regent, having managed this marriage would, in the name of the minor Maharajah, supersede her authority in the state."[13] It is, however, immaterial to discuss this question, for, being only about twelve years of age, she was not in a position to formulate any decision. The fact which admits of no doubt is that she represented the unanimous opinion of the Gwālior *Darbār* when she wrote to the Resident for the removal of the Regent. The Resident, of course, remonstrated, but to no effect, and "after discussions which lasted a fortnight, the Regent was dismissed."[14] Dada Khasjiwalla, though not formally appointed as Regent, henceforth exercised dominant influence in the Gwālior *Darbār*.

The attitude of the Governor-General at this juncture is not easy to explain. Soon after the appointment of Mama Saheb as Regent, Ellenborough expressed the view, in a letter to the Resident, that the authority of the new Regent should be supported, if need be, by 'march of troops upon Gwālior', and he had even taken measures "for the purpose of concentrating a preponderating force."[15] But as the Governor-General was assured by the Resident that he did not anticipate any such need, he countermanded those measures. Yet when Mama Saheb was dismissed, and the Resident applied for permission to call on the officer commanding at Agra for troops to support the Regent, it was refused. The ex-Regent was plainly told that the British Government could not give him permanent protection within the Gwālior State, and so he proceeded to Seronge within the British territory. The Governor-General also declared that he did "not wish to have any concern with the Mama Saheb's proceedings."[16]

It is significant that this changed attitude of the Governor-General coincided with his change of opinion about the ability of Mama Saheb. In a letter to the Resident, dated June 5, 1843, the Secretary to the Governor-General observed that the Mama Saheb "manifested a want of decision and energy", "proved himself quite unfit to manage either men or women", failed to use any of

his advantages, and "gradually allowed to grow up an opinion of his weakness."[17] Evidently, Ellenborough had reasons to feel that Mama Saheb did not, or would not, prove as pliant an instrument in his hands, for serving the cause of British interest, as he was led to expect.

The Governor-General seems to have been dissatisfied with the Resident, Mr. Spiers. Immediately after the dismissal of the Regent, Spiers was asked to quit Gwālior and retire to Dholpur. He was also asked to discontinue official intercourse with the Gwālior *Darbār*. In his letter to the Resident, dated June 20, the Governor-General claims that these two measures "had the desired effect of impressing the Maharani and the Durbar with a sense of the serious displeasure with which their recent conduct had been viewed by the British Government." But the Resident assured the Maharani that his proceeding to Dholpur was a matter of routine and had no political significance.[18] Further, as the Maharani had not appointed any minister in place of Mama Saheb and held the daily *Darbār*, the Resident was instructed by the Governor-General to carry on direct communication with her.[19] Such inconsistencies are difficult to explain.

The fact seems to be that the Governor-General was as yet undecided as to the line of action to be adopted towards Gwālior, and therefore did not push the matter to the extremes. But we can trace the gradual stiffening of his attitude. His first reaction can be seen in his letter to the Resident, dated 3 June, 1843. His Government, he said, could not acquiesce in the removal of the Regent "without the assignment of any reason for such a measure except the wish of the Maharanee." At the same time he observed that as there was a long line of common boundary between the dominions of Sindhia and British India, the Governor-General regarded it as of paramount importance to ensure peace and tranquillity within Gwālior and prevent "a lax system of rule generating habits of plunder along its frontier."[20] No serious objection could be taken to this attitude, particularly when we remember that, as noted above, he did not sanction the use of force in support of the Regent and directed the Resident to communicate directly with the Maharani.

But the mind of the Governor-General was fast moving, and he gradually assumed a more and more bellicose attitude. He now decided to teach Gwālior a lesson for its contumacy. In a letter to Queen Victoria on 13 August, 1843, he writes: "The example of a successful defiance of the British Government at Gwālior has led the weak Holkar to pay less attention to our expressed wishes. Disturbances are expected on the borders of Berar, and it is hardly

possible that the vicinity of the ungoverned districts belonging to the Gwālior State should not lead to much disposition to plunder along our frontier and that of our allies."[21] In a minute recorded on 10 August, he elaborates the same idea and argues that when such plunder takes place, the British Government will naturally ask for reparation, which the Gwālior *Darbār* will be unable to afford and must therefore be forcibly exacted.[22] We learn from both the letter and the minute that in anticipation of this danger, which did not yet exist but which he expected (or hoped for?), he had decided to assemble a considerable force, commanded by Sir Hugh Gough at Agra.

The psychological or political ground, which was evidently the real one, is also explained in his letter to Queen Victoria, dated August 13, 1843, namely, "the continued existence of a hostile Government at Gwālior would be inconsistent with the continuance of our permanent influence in India, by which alone its peace is preserved."

There was one additional reason which, according to Ellenborough, required "immediate adoption of measures of coercion." This was the existence of '70,000 Sikh soldiers within three marches of the Sutlej', "desirous of war and of plunder, and under no discipline or control." Though His Lordship hoped that there would be no war with the Sikhs, still he observed: "It would be unpardonable were we not to take every possible precaution against such an event, and no precaution appears to be more necessary, than that of rendering our rear, and our communications, secure by the re-establishment of a friendly government at Gwālior."[23]

The Governor-General expressed his conviction that all the purposes would be achieved by the expulsion of Dada Khasjiwalla from the *Darbār*.

When the Maharani expressed a strong desire that the Resident should return to Gwālior, he refused to do so, except "on condition of Dada Khasjeewalla being not only deprived of authority but punished by fine and banishment, or what was regarded as a preferable course, surrendered to the British Government."[24] Such a demand was preposterous as no such power was given to the British by any existing treaty. But the British Government soon found a pretext which was not only disingenuous, but frivolous—almost ridiculous in the extreme.

It was alleged that a paper, addressed to the Maharani by the Resident, which contained the demand for the punishment or surrender of the Dada, was intercepted by him. The Governor-General expressed "great indignation" at the conduct of the Dada in withholding the communication, which was declared to be "an offence

of a most criminal character against the State of Gwālior amounting to a supersession of the Maharani's authority, and the transference of all power in an unlawful manner to himself." "The Governor-General in Council," it was added, "will not permit any subject of the State of Gwālior thus to supersede the authority of his sovereign". The contemporary British historian, Thornton, has strongly denounced the language of the Governor-General and exposed the hollowness of the charge and the fallacious nature of the argument by which it was sustained. As he has pointed out, "the girl-Maharani was not the sovereign" and her position even as Regent was never admitted by the British Government. According to the declared conviction of the Government, neither (the Dada nor the Maharani) had any right to the exercise of sovereign authority (the boy Sindhia being the real sovereign). The charge of supersession of the sovereign authority by the Dada therefore certainly does not lie in the mouth of the British Government.[26]

All these arguments are justly advanced on the assumption that the Dada deliberately intercepted the letter with a view to hiding its contents from the Maharani But the real fact, and the motive for misinterpreting it deliberately, are thus set forth by John Hope.[26]

"The letter was written in the Persian language, and the Maharani, a child of thirteen, could neither read nor write any language at all. There was only one man in the capital who, by virtue of his hereditary office of 'Great Chamberlain and Keeper of the crown jewels,' could enter the most sacred of the female apartments, and that man was the Dada Khasjeewalla...... Who then, except this man, had the privilege to open and read the Governor-General's letter....? To suppose that this man, the favourite of the palace, cared to keep in ignorance a child, not out of the nursery, of the contents of a letter, albeit they conveyed censures upon himself, is in the last degree Quixotic. The only thing that can be said to explain the whole affair is *delenda est Carthago;* and that being so, this charge, contemptible as we regard it, would do as well as any other".

It is unnecessary to discuss at length the tortuous politics of the British and its reaction upon the Gwālior *Darbār*. The insistent demand of the British had the desired effect. Dada Khasjiwalla was confined. According to the British view this was the result of internal dissension. Even if it were so, it is impossible not to detect in it the hands of the British Resident. On the other hand, Hope says that it was done by the Gwālior *Darbār* to satisfy the British demands. But the British Government refused to be satisfied. The Resident insisted that the Dada should be handed over to him, and

declared that "the delivery of the Dada was the only measure which could arrest the advance of British troops."[27]

There can be no doubt that by this time the Governor-General had decided to coerce Gwālior by violence. As a preliminary step he personally proceeded to Agra and appointed as Resident, in place of Spiers, Sleeman, who was an avowed enemy of the Gwālior State.[28]

The Governor-General arrived at Agra on December 11, and next day made a formal communication to the Maharani that he had "directed the advance of the British armies."[29] Thereupon Dada Khasjiwalla was surrendered to the British and conducted to Agra.

As noted above, this was so far the only demand of the British Government, and the Governor-General was so convinced that the expulsion of Dada Khasjiwalla would "re-establish visibly our influence at Gwālior without delay", that even so late as November 1, 1843, he considered it "to be most prudent to confine to that one point any requisition addressed to the *darbār* of Gwālior."[30]

But, as the contemporary British historian observes, the ready submission of the Gwālior *Darbār* "under the influence of the terror imposed by the march of the British force seems to have effected a change in the policy of the Governor-General, and he determined to employ that terror as an instrument for obtaining those ulterior objects which less than two months before he had been content to leave to the effect of "influence."[31]

One of these objects, as Ellenborough informed Queen Victoria on 19 December, was "the disbandment and disarming of a disaffected portion of the Gwālior army", for "the existence of an army of such strength in that position must very seriously embarrass the disposition of troops we might be desirous of making to meet a coming danger from the Sutlej."[32]

But it was difficult to find a *casus belli* after the surrender of Dada Khasjiwalla. However, on December 19, Ellenborough took his stand upon the Treaty of Burhānpur, concluded in 1804, according to which the British Government undertook to assist Sindhia with a military force at his requisition. Unfortunately, there was no such requisition; but Ellenborough was not to be deterred by such inconvenient trifles. He boldly asserted that as the Maharaja and Maharani were "children incapable of acting for themselves", and the British Government "stood almost in the place of the guardian of the infant sovereign," it was for him to decide, requisition or no requisition, whether the safety and security of Gwālior required a British army.[33] But apart from this curious interpretation

of the Treaty of Burhānpur, there was the fact, ignored by the Governor-General, that the Treaty of Burhānpur had long ago ceased to be in force, being superseded by several other treaties, none of which referred to any part of it as still being operative, as would have been certainly the case if any such intention were there.

The contemporary British historian, Thornton, has lamented that the Governor-General should have taken resort to such an indefensible plea instead of boldly claiming, as the paramount authority in India, the right and duty of interfering in the affairs of Gwālior on the ground that its disordered state threatened the peace and tranquillity of India. Later historians have sought to justify Ellenborough's action on the same ground. But even this ground can hardly be justified. For such disturbances as occurred were more or less the result of British interference or British machinations, and they were certainly not of a serious character calling for British interference. As noted above, the Governor-General's military preparations were made not to put down any disturbances that actually occurred, but merely to avert any which was expected (or hoped?). In these circumstances little importance attaches to the disturbances that might have actually occurred, and there is less necessity of finding out their nature and causes. In view of the known desire of the British Government it would have been strange indeed if there had been no disturbances, and absolute quiet prevailed in Gwālior. It has been pointed out by Hope that at the very moment when Ellenborough was contemplating and justifying military interference in Gwālior for the sake of maintaining peace and tranquillity in the border areas, which its disordered state threatened, the two rich British provinces of Sāgar and Narbada, bordering on Sindhia's dominions, were in open insurrection, and two detachments of Sindhia's army were saving the British towns of Khimlassa and Balabehut from destruction by the rebels.[34]

When the stronger is determined to destroy the weaker party, pretexts are never wanting, and the former is hardly under any necessity to scrutinise them from either moral or legal point of view. This alone explains Ellenborough's reference to, and interpretation of, the Treaty of Burhānpur and his subsequent conduct.

At a conference held on 20 December between the Governor-General and cetrain chiefs of Gwālior, he specified the conditions on which alone he would stop the march of the British army. He had already informed the Maharani "that the movement of the British armies cannot be arrested until the Governor-General has full security for the future maintenance of tranquillity upon the common frontier; nor until there shall be established at Gwālior

a Government willing and able to coerce its own subjects and to maintain permanently the relations of amity with the British Government and its allies." In addition to these he now demanded an increase in the British force maintained at Gwālior under British officers and the assignment of districts to be administered under the British Government for its support. The advance of the British army would be stopped only if "a treaty, making provision for these and various other points, should be ratified within three days."[35] It was accordingly decided that there should be a meeting between the Maharaja and the Governor-General. The Gwālior chiefs suggested that the "place of meeting should be the ground then occupied by the British army—that being the spot where former Governors-General had been met on occasions of visiting Gwālior." They pointed out that if the British army passed the Gwālior frontier by crossing the Chambal river before the Maharaja met him, it would eternally disgrace the Maharaja and the Government. The Governor-General, however, expressed his determination to advance. In vain did the chiefs implore him, with joined hands, to reconsider his decision, and expressed their fear that if the British army crossed the frontier before the meeting of the Sindhia and the Governor-General, the troops of Gwālior would believe that the latter was coming not as a friend, but with a hostile intention, and serious consequences might follow. The newly appointed Resident, Sleeman, after meeting the Maharaja and the Maharani, also reported similar feelings on their part, and the "impossibility of averting collision" with the Gwālior force, if British troops crossed the Chambal.[36] The Governor-General, however, was deaf to all these and crossed the Chambal on 22 December. The Gwālior chiefs, who were friendly to the British, including the one who, according to British version, took the leading part in arresting Dada Khasjiwalla, left the British camp on the 25th, and proceeded to Gwālior.

The causes or sequence of events after this are not exactly known.[37] On 26 December, 1843, the Governor-General communicated to the Maharani that the treaty to be framed, embodying his demands, mentioned above, should be ratified on the 28th, and for each day's delay beyond that the Gwālior *Darbār* would have to pay a fine of fifteen thousand Rupees. But on 29 December, the British troops, under the Commander-in-Chief, Hugh Gough, came into clash with the Gwālior troops, and the Governor-General himself witnessed the military operations. The Gwālior troops occupied a strong position at Chonda, and while the British force was marching towards it, they unexpectedly met with the enemy troops at Mahārājpur, a strong position occupied by them during the night.

Here a sanguinary fight ensued, and though the Maratha troops fought with courage, they were dislodged and the British force proceeded to attack their main position at Chonda. The British army gained a complete victory but suffered heavy losses, and the gallantry of Gwālior troops extorted the admiration even of their opponents. On the same day, another wing of the British army defeated a large body of Gwālior troops near Punniar. The causes or circumstances leading to the military clash are not exactly known. It seems to be certain, however, that the British army took the aggressive and attacked the Maratha force without any formal declaration of war on either side.

Next day, that is on 30 December, the Governor-General held a conference with the Maharaja and the Maharani, and the Maharaja agreed to issue an order to all his officers and servants to desist from hostilities against the British armies. On January 5, 1844, the Governor-General dictated the terms of a treaty at Gwālior, of which the following are the main provisions.[38]

1. The British contingent force was increased and revenues of certain additional districts were assigned for the additional expenses involved, the civil administration of these being conducted by the British government, like those already so assigned.

2. The Gwālior *Darbār* was to pay in cash twenty-six lakhs of Rupees.

3. The military force of all arms to be maintained by the Maharaja was not to exceed nine thousand (and the surplus troops were forthwith disbanded).

4. Until the Maharaja attained majority on 19 January, 1853, the administration was to be carried on by a Council of Regency which would act upon the British Resident's advice "in all matters wherein such advice shall be offered."

On January 13, the very day on which the treaty was ratified by the Governor-General, it was publicly announced that as a result of his military victories the Governor-General had securely established British supremacy at Gwālior. In the despatch addressed to the Secret Committee, Ellenborough observed that "neither the excitement of victory nor the consciousness of irresistible power has led to the entertainment of views of ambitious aggrandizement."[39] Later British historians and statesmen have given him credit for his moderation that he did not annex the dominions of Sindhia to the British territory. Of course, if a crime, however grave, is to be applauded simply on the ground that a still graver crime, though feasible, was not perpetrated, Ellenborough is entitled to the praise

showered upon him. For, compared with his action in Sindh, he showed moderation in the case of Gwālior. But in both cases he was undoubtedly guilty of high-handed acts of injustice, involving employment of brute force, without any redeeming feature or extenuating factor. He was a true representative of the most aggressive form of British Imperialism which slowly made its appearance after the Third Maratha War in 1818, and led to the frank assumption by the British of a position of paramountcy in India, as an established fact, with its rights and obligations widely different in character from those that had hitherto prevailed.

It is somewhat singular that in the *Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy*[40] Ellenborough's action has been described as "both just and salutary", though in the immediately preceding paragraph his annexation of Sindh has been denounced in the strongest language. The course of events in Gwālior has been described above in some detail in order to enable any unprejudiced person to draw his own conclusion.

But the grounds on which Ellenborough's policy has been commended is worth noticing: "A disputed regency and an overgrown local army had created a situation of danger which the Paramount Power very properly refused to tolerate."[41] As noted above, the dispute about regency was solely the creation of the British. So the real ground was the strength of Sindhia's army. This is further
growing disorder in the Panjāb. His *coup d'etat* at Gwālior secured
borough showed strategical insight. He had carefully watched the growing disorder in the Panjāb. His *coup d'etat* at Gwālior secured both the rear and the communications of the British army in the event of a Sikh War."[42] That this was the real ground of Ellenborough's action has been indirectly admitted by himself, as noted above. There is therefore hardly any doubt that the actions of Ellenborough in Sindh and Gwālior were inspired by the same "strategical insight" of a "Paramount Power", and it is idle to pretend any moral or legal justification in either case.

1. See above, Vol. VIII. For the terms of the Treaty (of Gwālior, dated 5th November, 1817), cf. Aitchison, Vol. V, pp. 404-8.
2. Beveridge, III. 113.
3. Ibid, 221.
3a. Aitchison, V. 117 (Article 2)
4. John Hope, *The House of Scindia* (London, 1863), pp. 26 ff. The quotations are given in Basu-I, 782
5. The age is given as 13 by Thornton, but Ellenborough, in his letter to the Queen, dated 19 February, 1843, refers to her age as eleven (Basu-I, 842).
6. Basu-I, 842.
7. Hope, op. cit. 42.
8. Ibid.
9. Beveridge, III. 473.
10. Basu-I, 843.

11. "On the 21st the Maharanee summoned to her presence all the chiefs in camp excepting Mama Sahib, and subsequently despatched a message to the British Resident, complaining of the conduct of the Regent, and expressing a desire for his removal" (Thornton, VI. 470-1).
12. Basu-I, 843.
13. Ellenborough's letter to the Queen, dated 8 June, 1843 (Basu-I, 843).
14. Ibid.
15. Thornton, VI. 530.
16. Ibid, 471-5.
17. Ibid, pp. 534 ff. (footnote).
18. Ibid, 540.
19. Ibid, 537, fn. para 10.
20. Ibid, 533, fn.
21. Basu-I, 846.
22. Thornton, VI, 479-80.
23. Ibid, 489.
24. Ibid, 481.
25. Ibid. 481-2.
26. Basu-I, 847. Hope, op. cit. 58-9.
27. Thornton, VI. 491.
28. In his *Rambles and Recollections*, Sleeman wrote: "As a citizen of the world I could not help thinking that it would have been a great blessing upon a large portion of our species if an earthquake were to swallow up this court of Gwalior and the army that surrounds it". (Quoted in Basu-I, 846).
29. Thornton, VI. 494.
30. Ibid, fn.
31. Ibid, 495.
32. Basu-I, 848.
33. Thornton, VI. 501. For the provisions of the Treaty of Burhanpur, dated 27 February, 1804, cf Aitchison, V. 394-9.
34. Basu-I, 844-5.
35. Thornton, VI 495-7.
36. Thornton, VI. 502-4; Beveridge, III. 480.
37. The account that follows is based upon Thornton, VI. 506 ff.
38. For full details, cf. Thornton, VI. 518. Aitchison, V. 416-20.
39. Thornton, VI. 525.
40. *CHBFP*, II. 211.
41. Ibid.
42. Ibid, 212.

CHAPTER X

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE SIKH KINGDOM

I. RANJIT SINGH[1]

1. *Conquest of the Panjāb*

At the time of Ranjit Singh's birth on 13 November, 1780, the greater part of the Panjāb plains was divided among twelve Sikh *misls* or associations of warriors. Ranjit's father was the leader of one of these *misls*; but when he died in 1790, his enterprising son was inspired by the ambition of bringing all the Sikh principalities under his personal sway. Ranjit achieved great success in this task, but was confronted with the power of the British who had extended their power to the Yamunā (Jumna) after the second Maratha War in 1803-4.

Ranjit also cast his longing eyes towards Kohistān or the Panjāb Hill regions which were parcelled out among a number of petty hill chiefs. Here Ranjit had to face the rivalry of the newly founded Gurkhā kingdom of Nepāl which extended from Sikkim to the borders of Kāshmir, and included Garhwāl, Kumāon and the Simlā hill States. In the west, his neighbour was the powerful Afghān kingdom which still exercised sway over Kāshmir and territories on both sides of the Sindhu (Indus), including Attock, Peshāwār, Bānnu, and the Derās with nominal supremacy over Multān and Sindh. The Sikhs had checked the aggressive designs of Ahmad Shah Durrani upon the Panjāb and stood as a bulwark against Afghān conquest of India. Ranjit Singh occupied Lahore in A.D. 1799 and proved to be a capable leader.

The fear of an Afghān invasion (by Zaman Shah) about this time and of Napoleon's invasion a few years later prompted the British to conciliate Ranjit Singh, and they sent to him an agent, Munshi Yusuf Ali Khan, with presents valued at ten thousand Rupees. Ranjit Singh, on his part, refused the appeal of help from Holkar when the latter, pursued by Lake, had reached Amritsar in 1805 during the Second Maratha War. This paved the way for a treaty of friendship in 1806[1a] between the British on the one hand, and Ranjit Singh and Sardar Fateh Singh, the Sikh chief of Kapurthalā, on the other. This treaty provided that so long as the Sikh chieftains did not form any friendly relations with the enemies of the British, nor committed an act of hostility, the British armies

should never enter the territories of the said chieftains, nor would the British Government form any plans for the seizure or sequestration of their possessions or property.

The British, however, looked upon the Sutlej as a better frontier than the Yamunā (Jumna) for purposes of defence, and were therefore opposed to the advance of the power of Ranjit Singh beyond that river, to the south. When Ranjit Singh tried to extend his power in that direction, in order to bring all the Sikh States within his sphere of influence and thus consolidate a powerful and united Sikh State, the British stood in his way. The cis-Sutlej Sikh States had come under the sphere of influence of Sindhia by the treaty of 1785, but at the end of the Second Maratha War, in 1806, that influence nominally passed over to the British. In reality neither Sindhia nor the British had any claim over them. The chronic quarrels among these States, which had enabled Sindhia to establish his influence, also helped Ranjit Singh to do the same. An appeal for help by some of the chiefs gave him the pretext for leading military expeditions in 1806 and 1807, and occupying Ludhiānā. But both could play at the same game, and a rival group, comprising the Sikh chiefs of Patiālā, Nābhā, Jind, Kaithal and a few other smaller States, was encouraged by the British to ask for their protection. The British Government sent Sir Charles Metcalfe to negotiate with Ranjit Singh a treaty of both offensive and defensive alliance against the French Ranjit regarded Britain's necessity as his opportunity and tried to seize as much of the cis-Sutlej territory as possible. He crossed the Sutlej, seized Faridkot and Ambālā, levied tributes in Maler Kotlā and Thānesar, and "entered into a symbolical brotherhood or alliance with the Raja of Patiālā." He then demanded from the British an acknowledgment of his right over the cis-Sutlej States, as the price of the proposed alliance. Unfortunately for Ranjit, owing to the outbreak of the Peninsular War about this time, Napoleon's designs upon India ceased to be any real danger. The British, having no longer any need for defensive alliance with Ranjit Singh against the French, decided to restrain him by force from extending his dominions to the south of the Sutlej. A body of British troops crossed the Yamunā and marched towards Ludhiānā in 1809; a proclamation was issued declaring that the cis-Sutlej States were under British protection, and that any aggression on these territories would be resisted with arms. Ranjit Singh, though disappointed and sorely aggrieved, was fully alive to the realities of the situation. His power was established only over a part of the Panjāb, and even that was not quite secure, and it would be sheer madness on his part to declare war against the British who were now practically master of the whole of India. He therefore made the best of

a bad job, and concluded a treaty with the British at Amritsar in 1809.[1b] By this treaty the absolute authority of Ranjit Singh was recognized over the territories of 45 *Parganās,* already held by him, to the south of the Sutlej. But with this exception, the Sutlej was fixed as the southern boundary of his sphere of influence, and the "British Government will have no concern with the territories and subjects of the Rajah to the northward of the River Sutlej." There was a proviso that "the Raja will never maintain in the territory, occupied by him and his dependants on the left bank of the River Sutlej, more troops than are necessary for the internal duties of this territory." This treaty put an end to Ranjit Singh's ambition of knitting together all the Sikhs between the Sindhu (Indus) and the Yamunā (Jumna) into one compact and homogeneous people. But the treaty was not without its advantage. Having secured his eastern frontier, Ranjit Singh was now free to give his ambitious aggressive designs free and full play in the other directions.

Immediately after the treaty of 1809 Ranjit turned his attention to Kāngrā. The Gurkhas, under the able leadership of Amar Singh Thapa, had conquered all the petty hill States to the east of the Sutlej, and in May, 1806, crossed the river and threatened Kāngrā. The Katoch Chief, Sansār Chānd, with his capital at Nadaun, was in possession of this region, and approached Ranjit Singh for help against the Gurkhas. Ranjit asked for the famous Kāngrā fort as the price of his help. Sansār Chānd refused, but was unable to resist the Gurkhas, and the Kāngrā valley was a scene of anarchy and devastation for a period of three years. Sansār Chānd now parleyed with both Ranjit and Amar Singh Thapa and promised the cession of Kāngrā fort to both. Enraged at this duplicity, Ranjit, as soon as his hands were free after the treaty of 1809, marched in person and secured the possession of Kāngrā without much difficulty, in August, 1809. Ranjit next made alliance with the hill-chiefs and cut off the communications of Amar Singh Thapa. The Gurkha chief purchased his retreat by paying one lakh of Rupees to Ranjit, and crossed the Sutlej, abandoning his conquests on the right side of the river.

Ranjit also completed and consolidated his conquests in the Panjāb. Elphinstone, writing in 1809, observed that Ranjit, who was but one of many chiefs in the Panjāb in 1805, had acquired the sovereignty of all the Sikhs in the Panjāb. This was not strictly true, for some of the scattered *misls* were not finally subdued till 1823. By that year all the Sikh *misls* to the west and north of the Sutlej were finally absorbed, and the large number of rival groups of *misls*, forming the Sikh Khālsā or Commonwealth, were replaced

by a strong centralised monarchy under Ranjit Singh. Still, it must be remembered, the dream of Ranjit Singh of forming a united Sikh kingdom was not realised, as the Sikh States to the east and south of the Sutlej lay outside his dominions, under the protection of a foreign power, the British.

The treaty of 1809 also enabled Ranjit to turn his attention to the west, and during the fifteen years that followed the treaty, i.e. between A.D. 1810 and 1824, he carried on a series of campaigns against the Afghāns. Reference has been made above, in Chapter VII, to the decline and downfall of the Durrani kingdom, and the course of events which forced its rulers, Shah Zaman (1793-1800) and Shah Shuja (1803-1809), to take refuge in India, and made the Barakzai brothers virtual masters of the country. In consequence of this, the Governors of the distant Indian possessions of the kingdom of Kābul became *de facto* independent rulers; Ranjit also took full advantage of the situation to conquer gradually the Muslim principalities on the left bank of the Sindhu.

The ex-king Shah Shuja had an interview with Ranjit at Sahiwāl, but nothing took place beyond formal exchange of compliments. Shuja secured Peshāwār but was driven away by the Barakzais. After some time he fell into the hands of Jahandad Khan, Afghān Governor of Attock, who sent him to his brother, Ata Muhammad Khan, Governor of Kāshmir. Shuja was there kept a close prisoner, but his family, with that of Shah Zaman, found shelter in Lahore. The Begum of Shuja received an allowance of 4,000 Rupees a month from Ranjit, and is said to have promised to hand him the famous diamond, Kohinoor, on the release of her husband.

Towards the close of 1812, Fateh Khan, the eldest of the Barakzai brothers, and the all-powerful *Wazir* of the nominal Durrani King, Shah Mahmud, came to India to punish the Governors of Attock and Kāshmir who had ceased to pay allegiance to the king of Kābul. Fateh Khan made an alliance with Ranjit, who sent 12,000 Sikh troops to his aid. Kāshmir was occupied and its Governor, Atā Muhammad, driven away, but Fateh Khan did not give his ally the stipulated share of spoils. Nevertheless the Sikhs got hold of the person of Shuja, and gained a first-hand knowledge of the difficult terrain of Kāshmir Valley which stood them in good stead in future. The Kāshmir expedition also helped Ranjit in another way. Jahandad Khan, Governor of Attock, alarmed at the discomfiture of his brother Ata Muhammad in Kāshmir, entered into an alliance with Ranjit who, on payment of a lakh of Rupees, got possession of Attock early in March, 1813. As soon as Fateh Khan came to know of this he advanced against Attock, which was also threatened by his brother

Dost Muhammad, who advanced from Kābul with 4,000 cavalry. After a number of skirmishes in which the Sikhs were almost uniformly successful, a pitched battle took place at the Chach plain, near Hazro, on 26 June, 1813. Ranjit obtained a decisive victory, and the Afghāns retreated towards Peshāwār. In 1814, Ranjit sent an expedition against Kāshmir, but it did not achieve any success. This failure emboldened some chiefs in the hill region, like those of Rajori and Punch, to rise against Ranjit, but they were all subdued during 1815 and 1816. About this time war broke out between Nepāl and the British, and Amar Singh, the Gurkha Chief who had tested the valour and strength of Ranjit in the Kāngrā valley, asked for his help. But Ranjit, true to his alliance with the British, refused it.

Shortly after this Ranjit renewed his efforts to conquer Multān. His expeditions against it in 1802, 1807, and 1810 had not proved successful. He sent two more expeditions in 1816 and 1817, but though they gained military successes and heavy ransom, Multān still remained unsubdued. In 1818 Ranjit made a final effort and conquered Multān.

About this time the Afghān kingdom was passing through a period of confusion and turmoil in consequence of the murder of the *Wazir*, Fateh Khan, in 1818, as mentioned above.[2] Ranjit took advantage of it to advance, for the first time, to the right bank of the Sindhu. He conquered Khairābād, and even took possession of Peshāwār. Ranjit left Peshāwār after appointing as its governor Jahandad Khan, who had surrendered Attock to him. But as no Sikh garrison was left there, the Barakzais reoccupied Peshāwār after two months.

Ranjit was more successful in the north. The Afghān garrison in Kāshmir was much reduced, as a large number of veteran troops were recalled to Kābul during the political turmoil of 1818. Ranjit made the third attempt to conquer Kāshmir, and sent three armies against it, one of which was led by him in person. After a campaign of nearly two years, the Afghāns, being completely defeated, fled to Peshāwār, and the whole of Kāshmir came into the possession of Ranjit in A.D. 1819.

Ranjit next directed his attention to the conquest of the mid-Indus region. In course of 1820 and 1821 he conquered Derā Ghāzi Khān, Derā Ismāil Khān to the west of the Sindhu, and Bhakkar, Leiah, and Mankera, between that river and the Jhelum-Chenāb. Thus the Sindhu became the boundary of the kingdom of Ranjit, while, beyond that river, Khairābād, opposite Attock, was in his direct possession, and Derā Ghāzi Khān and Derā Ismāil Khān were held by his feudatories.

The murder of Fateh Khan raised his brother Muhammad Azim Khan to the headship of the Barakzais. Azim Khan's departure from Kāshmir with Afghān troops had enabled Ranjit to conquer Kāshmir. Now the discord between Azim Khan and his brother Yar Muhammad, who was in possession of Peshāwār, induced Ranjit to advance towards the Sindhu. Yar Muhammad offered submission to Ranjit and agreed to pay him tribute. Azim Khan was furious and advanced to Peshāwār, declaring holy war against Ranjit. A pitched battle was fought at Nowsherā on 14 March, 1823. "The fanaticism of the Akalis (Sikhs) was pitted against the fanaticism of the Ghazis,"[3] but after a severe engagement the Sikhs obtained a complete victory. Azim Khan fled from the battlefield, leaving his tents and guns, and Ranjit entered Peshāwār in triumph. But, perhaps in view of the difficulty of holding the country on account of the turbulent hill tribes of the region, he left it in charge of Yar Muhammad as a feudatory. Ranjit also collected tribute from Tank and Bannu in 1824.

2. *Relation with the British.*

In spite of all these brilliant successes, Ranjit Singh remained true to his alliance with the British throughout his life. He refused to take advantage of the difficulties of the British, as for example, when they sustained reverses in the early stages of their war in Nepāl (1816) and Burma (1824). He refused help to Nepāl against the British, as mentioned above. The Bhonsla Raja of Nāgpur, driven from his kingdom during the Third Maratha War, appealed to him for help in 1820; the Nepāl Government proposed a defensive alliance in 1824, and the ruler of Bharatpur asked for his help in 1825. Ranjit rejected all these in his scrupulous regard for the treaty of friendship with the British.

But the British did not show the same regard for him. When the Wahabis declared *jihād* or holy war against the Sikhs in 1826, they organised their campaigns from British territories, as mentioned in Chapter XIV. This was done, not only with the full knowledge of the British, but even with their permission. The Wahabi leader informed the Lieutenant-Governor of N.W.P. that he "was preparing for a jehad against the Sikhs and hoped that the British Government had no objection to it. The Lieutenant-Governor wrote to him in reply that as long as the peace of their territories was not disturbed, they had nothing to say, nor had they any objection to such preparations".[3a] The British, no doubt, hoped that the rising of the Pathans in the north-western frontier against the Sikhs would embroil Ranjit Singh and weaken his State, and this would be to their advantage. Actually the Wahabis proved a

formidable foe. They carried on the struggle for more than four years and even captured Peshāwār, but the defeat and death of the Wahabi leader, Sayyid Ahmad of Bareilly, at the battle of Balakot on May 8, 1831, ended the trouble.

After making himself master of the Panjāb, Ranjit Singh tried to extend his power to Sindh in the south. But here, too, he was checkmated by the British, as has been related above in Chapter VIII. Outwardly, the British showed a great deal of regard and friendship for Ranjit Singh. The King of England sent a friendly letter with a present of five horses and an English coach. Burnes, who was charged with the mission of delivering them, proceeded by way of the Sindhu river, with the deliberate, but secret, object of securing information of political and geographical nature about Sindh. The Governor-General, Lord William Bentinck, met Ranjit Singh at Rupār on the Sutlej in October, 1831, and renewed the treaty of alliance with him. But on that very day, instructions had been issued to Pottinger to prepare for a mission to Sindh with a view to the negotiation of a treaty with its rulers; and this was kept a secret from Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

Foiled in his designs against Sindh, Ranjit turned his attention to Shikārpur, a town in Sindh to the west of the Sindhu. He had already conquered territories to the west of the Sindhu, such as Peshāwār, Derā Ghāzi Khān, and Derā Ismāil Khān, and other places, and the seizure of Shikārpur was not a violation of the treaty of 1809 in any way.[3b] But the British bluntly told him that he could not extend his power to Shikārpur. This arbitrary act provoked the Sikhs, and Ranjit Singh was asked by his chiefs not to yield, but to fight the English in defence of his rights. But Ranjit was a far-sighted statesman, and knew that he was no match for the British. So he sullenly gave up the idea of conquering Shikārpur. Another grave offence was given to him by the British in 1835. The sovereignty of Ranjit Singh over Firozpur was recognized by them, but on the death of its ruler without heir, the city was occupied by the British in 1835, and converted into a military cantonment in 1838. The reason for this is not far to seek. As Murray wrote: "The capital of Lahore is distant only 40 miles with a single river to cross, fordable for six months in the year. The fort of Ferozepur from every point of view seems to be of highest importance to the British Government."[4]

3 *Relation with the Afghāns.*

The last phase of Ranjit's diplomatic relation with the British was connected with the expedition of Shah Shuja to Kābul

As mentioned above, Shah Shuja was kept in close confinement in Kāshmir, but was released by the general who led the first abortive Sikh expedition to Kāshmir in alliance with Fateh Khan. Shuja accompanied the Sikh general to Lahore and joined his family who had already found refuge there. As stated above, the Begum of Shuja received from Ranjit an allowance of four thousand Rupees a month, and this generosity was not probably altogether unconnected with an offer reported to be made by her to hand over the famous diamond, Kohinoor, as the price of her husband's release from captivity. No authentic and impartial account of Shah Shuja's life in Lahore is available. The story, as recounted by himself, may be summed up as follows:[5]

On the second day after Shuja's arrival in Lahore, an agent of Ranjit came to him and demanded the Kohinoor. Shuja replied that he would give it only when real friendship was established between him and Ranjit Singh. A detailed account is given by Shah Shuja of the troubles and indignities to which he was put, as he refused the almost daily demand for the diamond on the same plea. At last, so we are told, Ranjit himself came and swore, on the holy *granth*, eternal friendship for Shuja, granted him some districts, and promised assistance in the shape of troops and treasure to the Shah to recover his throne. Shah Shuja then gave the Kohinoor to Ranjit, but the latter did not fulfil his part of the contract. Shuja's men were not given possession of the districts assigned to him; he was treated with indignity; and his valuables were plundered. With great difficulty the Shah, with his family, escaped to Ludhiānā, and placed himself under British protection in September, 1816.

This version seems to be not a little overdrawn, but there is little doubt that Ranjit put severe pressure on the unfortunate ex-ruler of Kābul in order to get possession of the Kohinoor, which was valued by a judge of diamonds "at half of the daily expenses of the whole world."[6] Indeed the lure of this rich treasure was such that when Shah Shuja was a prisoner in Kāshmir, its Governor, Ata Muhammad Khan, frequently held a lancet over his eyes with a view to extorting the Kohinoor from him. The Begum of Shah Shuja really apprehended that her husband's eyes would be taken out, and it is not unlikely that she actually promised the diamond as a condition of his release. In any case, "Ranjit later told Wade, the British Agent at Ludhiānā, that Shuja was rescued because the Kohinoor had been promised as the price."[7] Ranjit Singh had therefore probably both moral and legal right to demand the precious jewel, and Shuja's obstinacy in refusing to part with it justified, to

a certain extent, the harsh measures adopted towards him. This cannot, however, condone Ranjit's duplicity, alleged by Shuja, in granting some districts on paper and then refusing actual possession of them. There are, however, good grounds to reject at least this part of Shuja's story, for there are some documentary evidences to show "that the districts promised must have been assigned to Shuja and his control established there."[8] It is also necessary to remember that even after the alleged repeated plunders of his valuables, Shah Shuja, after his flight from Lahore, "had still in his possession jewels whose sale proceeds yielded him a very considerable amount at Ludhiana and enabled him later to embark on his ambitious ventures."[9] On the whole, one might accept, in a general way, the opinion of Osborne on the transactions in regard to the Kohinoor, that "the character of Ranjit Singh, more unscrupulous than cruel, was curiously displayed in the measures he adopted. No greater severity was employed than appeared absolutely necessary to overcome the obstinacy of the Shah, and none was omitted that promised the accomplishment of the end."[10] It goes without saying that one who had risked being blinded rather than part with the Kohinoor, needed a far greater degree of coercion and coaxing than would be normally required.

In judging the whole episode, it is also worthy of note that in spite of the alleged cruel treatment by Ranjit Singh, Shuja sent complimentary presents to him in 1830, and received from him, in 1833-4, for his Kandāhār expedition, a sum variously estimated as 14,500 to 1,25,000 Rupees.[11]

In order to understand this expedition in its proper perspective, it is necessary to go back a little.

When Muhammad Azim Khan, the Barakzai chief, was hurrying back from Kāshmir to Kābul after the murder of Fateh Khan in 1818, he offered Shah Shuja, then at Ludhiānā, the throne of Kābul. Shah Shuja accompained him, but his haughtiness irritated Azim Khan, who deserted him on the way and chose Shah Ayub as his nominee and tool. Shuja fled to Sindh, and collected an army at Shikārpur. But this army melted away at the approach of Azim Khan and Shuja returned to Ludhiānā in 1821.

Ten years later, in 1831, Shah Shuja sought Ranjit's alliance to make another effort to recover his throne. But Ranjit's demands, including prohibition of cow-slaughter throughout Afghānistān, delivery of the gates of Somnāth, and the attendance of the Afghān heir apparent with an auxiliary force at the Lahore *darbār*, were unacceptable to Shah Shuja.[12] Shuja was, however, more successful two years later, and a treaty was concluded with Ranjit Singh

in 1833. The three objectionable conditions, mentioned above, were waived, and in return for pecuniary help Shuja recognised Ranjit Singh's sway on the right bank of the Sindhu over the territories he had already conquered. Regarding Shikārpur and the territory of Sindh on the right bank of the Sindhu, the matter was left to the arbitration of the British. Shuja got an advance of 4 months' pensions from the British, and a sum of money (14,500 or 1,25,000 Rupees) from Ranjit Singh. The British also "suffered Shah Shuja to raise an army of invasion under the shadow of British flag".[13] How Shuja advanced upon Shikārpur, defeated the Chiefs of Sindh, and was finally routed by Dost Muhammad near Kandāhār, has been stated above, in Chapter VII.

Ranjit Singh, however, took full advantage of the treaty. He decided to annex Peshāwār which was then held by his tributary, Sultan Muhammad. The citadel of Peshāwār was stormed in 1834, and Sultan Muhammad fled to Dost Muhammad, the ruler of Kābul and the most powerful among the Barakzai Chiefs.

Dost Muhammad made elaborate preparations for a final trial of strength with the Sikhs. He declared a *jihād* or holy war against the Sikhs, and made an appeal to the Muslim tribes far and near who were impelled by political interest, religious sentiment, as well as the instinct of self-preservation, to make one grand effort to remove this thorn in the flesh of the Pathans. "From Kohistan, from the hills beyond, from the regions of the Hindukush, from the remote fastnesses of Turkistan, multitudes of various tribes and denominations came flocking to the Amir's standard. Ghilzyes and Kohistanis, sleek Kuzzilbashes and rugged Oozbegs, horsemen and footmen, came pouring amain. The brave heart of Ranjit Singh quailed before this immense assembly".[13a]

The troops assembled under the standard of Dost Muhammad numbered 40,000, besides a great multitude of the Ghazi volunteers who are ever ready to kill infidels or die a martyr's death in the cause of Islam. He had also 37 guns provided with 700 rounds of ammunition for each.

Ranjit was faced with a grave crisis. But he tried diplomacy with conspicuous success. He opened negotiations with Dost Muhammad, and utilised the time gained thereby to concentrate his forces and win over some of the brothers of Dost Muhammad. He was completely successful with Ṣultan Muhammad, the late feudatory of Peshāwār. The latter knew that Peshāwār, even if recovered, would be annexed by Dost Muhammad, and agreed to join Ranjit on condition that he and his brothers would be given Kohāt, Tank and Bannu as *jāgīrs*. So he withdrew from the Afghān camp with

his soldiers and joined Ranjit. This had great demoralising effect on the whole Afghān army. To make matters worse, Ranjit, taking advantage of the negotiations, massed his troops and almost surrounded Dost Muhammad. So Dost Muhammad, regarding discretion as the better part of valour, retreated from the battlefield with all his equipment and stores. Thus Ranjit won a bloodless victory; and this success raised his prestige and established his authority on the western side of the Sindhu. To secure his position still further, Ranjit annexed Derā Ismāil Khān, which was hitherto ruled by a feudatory, and built a fort at Jāmrud at the very mouth of the Khyber Pass. Indeed the spirit of the Sikhs rose so high that they openly talked of a march on Kābul. It was even reported that Ranjit offered to Shuja to conquer Kābul and Kandāhār for him if he formally, in writing, relinquished his claims over Shikārpur and Peshāwār.

Alarmed at all these news from the frontier, Dost Muhammad sent an army of 18,000 under his sons to Jāmrud. There were then only 600 Sikhs at the place, who kept the Afghāns at bay for three or four days till Hari Singh, the ablest Sikh general, came to their aid with 10,000 men. In the battle that followed the Afghān army retired in confusion. The Sikhs then began plundering the enemy's camp, and fell into disorder, when, charged by a fresh body of Afghāns, they retreated to the fort. The Sikhs, however, soon rallied and threw up entrenchment at night. The Afghāns, after watching for five or six days, finally retired, without achieving any conspicuous success. But the Sikhs suffered a terrible loss in the death of Hari Singh in course of the first day's disorderly retreat. On the other hand, though the Afghāns felt elated at this event, the engagement at Jāmrud marked the end of Dost Muhammad's efforts against the Sikhs. He was now convinced that it was beyond his power to challenge the Sikh Lion.

While Dost Muhammad was engaged in fruitless endeavour to chastise the Sikhs, his destiny was being shaped by a chain of circumstances which, as stated in Chapter VII, ultimately induced the British to make a plan, in concert with Ranjit Singh, to drive him from Kābul and re-establish Shah Shuja on the throne.

When the British proposed the Tripartite Treaty to effect this purpose, Ranjit Singh was in a great dilemma. He knew full well that Shah Shuja would be merely a tool in the hands of the British, and the establishment of British supremacy in Afghānistān would be a grave danger to the Panjāb, which would then be hemmed in by the British on the west, south and east. But when he came to know that the British were "determined to carry out the project

even without him", he became a party to the alliance, for he would not allow the British to have the sole credit for making Shah Shuja the king of Afghānistān, and use him later in their aggressive design against the Panjāb. So he signed the Tripartite Treaty on June 26, 1838. He refused to permit the passage of the main British army of invasion through the Panjāb on their way to Afghānistān, but faithfully carried out his obligations under the treaty.

The Tripartite Treaty,[13b] as noted in Chapter VII, was a great diplomatic triumph for Ranjit, but he did not live to see the end of the venture. He died on June 27, 1839, while the British army was still triumphantly marching towards Kābul. It is not difficult to imagine that he must have received the news of the continued successes of his allies with mixed feelings. He was convinced of the irresistible might of the British, and is said to have made a prophecy that some day the whole of India would be occupied by them. The prospect of the British entrenching their power in Kābul behind its nominal ruler must have made him uneasy about the future of his own kingdom.

4 *The Character of Ranjit*

That Ranjit Singh did not entertain any sincere feelings of friendship for the British hardly admits of doubt. He was thwarted by them in cis-Sutlej States as well as in Sindh, and in the latter case he had every reason to charge the British with bad faith and selfish aggrandisement at his cost. The question has often been asked, why he yielded to the British on every point. The usual answer, which is also probably the true one, is that he was a realist; he knew the strength and resources of the British and therefore fully realized the futility of opposing them.[13c] But some historians have criticised this decision and attitude as unwise. They urge that Ranjit could not be ignorant of the possibility—which amounted almost to a certainty—that ere long the Panjāb would be conquered by the British. His famous saying 'that the map of India will be all red' proves it beyond doubt. Would it not have been wiser, therefore, to forestall the designs of the British and try conclusions with them before they had time to entrench themselves in India? Ranjit, in their opinion, should have accepted the proffered alliance of Nepāl and organised a confederacy of other Indian powers, like the Maratha chiefs, against the British Whatever might have been the result, the chances of success for such a forward policy were undoubtedly far greater than merely waiting for the inevitable doom. Ranjit forgot that "in politics, as in war, time is not on the side of the defensive."[134]

Such criticism is in reality a great tribute to the genius of Ranjit Singh. In spite of many obvious differences he offers a striking analogy to Shivaji. Both moulded groups of scattered peoples into a compact nationality, and built up a military kingdom strong enough to hold its own against powerful neighbours. Any one who dispassionately reads the accounts of the battles fought by the Sikhs against the British, which will be described in a later section, may be pardoned for the belief that under the direction of a master-mind like Ranjit Singh, and with civil and military leaders free from the taints of bribery, corruption and selfishness, the Sikhs might have proved a formidable obstacle to the British Empire in India. What Shivaji's Marathas did in the eighteenth century to the Mughuls, Ranjit's Sikhs might do unto the British in the nineteenth.

That this did not happen is partly to be explained by the personal character of Ranjit and his system of administration. Unlettered like Shivaji, Ranjit lacked his moral character. "He passed from war to wine and from learning to hunting with breathless rapidity".[14] What was worse, his open sensuality sapped the vitality of the Court. The licentious character of his queen, Jindan, converted the royal harem almost into a brothel—at least such was the popular belief which found expression in the public demand in the open court for the removal of her paramours [15] That this had a deleterious effect on the fortunes of the Sikhs is amply proved by facts of history.

Another vital defect was the centralisation of all powers in the person of the ruler, and the absence of any organized system of administration which alone could ensure stability to the newly founded kingdom. There was nothing in the Lahore *darbār* corresponding to the *Asht-pradhāns* instituted by Shivaji.

The greatest achievement of Ranjit was the creation of the army. He took the help of foreign experts like Allard, Ventura and Court, and no less than twenty European and Anglo-Indian officers served under him [16] But they merely carried out details under the master-mind of Ranjit, who himself initiated the idea of training a regular army. It is said that he once went incognito to look at a review of Lord Lake's army.

With the help of his fine army Ranjit achieved the two outstanding successes in his life, namely, the unification of the Panjāb and the hill States to the north under one banner, and the successful check to Afghān aggressions. But in respect of military organisation, Ranjit was not free from the defect which has always proved the bane of Indian army, namely, the irregularity of payment and the appointment of unworthy favourites to its command. Even

during his lifetime this irregularity of payment attracted the notice of shrewd Englishmen like Burnes. Lawrence made some very pertinent observations which have a wider application to the entire system of administration. "The building completed", said Lawrence, "the Maharaja does not think the same care necessary for its preservation as its construction, and boys, simpletons and dotards are here, as in older services, creeping into commands ... The army is seldom less than twelve months in arrears. Once, indeed, I saw the Maharajah obliged to take refuge in Govind Garh, from the violence of his Gurkha Battalion roused to desperation by being kept out of their pay."[17] The first sentence sums up the whole situation. Discontent caused by irregularity of payment and appointment of unworthy officers developed the spirit of indiscipline to which reference will be made later. Ranjit Singh built up a mighty kingdom, but did not care to take sufficient steps to maintain it. He created one of the finest armies India has ever seen, but that contained within itself the seeds of destruction which brought down the mighty fabric in a crash.

No doubt accident, or what many would choose to call 'destiny', had its due share in bringing about the tragedy. All the able generals of the Sikh army—Mokhan Chand, Dewan Chand, Hari Singh Nalwa, Ram Dayal—died during the lifetime of Ranjit, and "only crafty designing men, either weaklings or traitors, survived to command his forces".[17a]

Things were no better on the side of civil administration. The only legitimate son of Ranjit was an imbecile. There were reputed sons of Ranjit, but it is a sad commentary on the morality of the royal family that in every case the parentage of these was doubtful and disputed.

Cunningham remarks about Ranjit that "like all despots and solitary authorities he laid himself open to the charge of extravagant partiality and favouritism."[18] This applies particularly to the elevation of the three brothers, Gulab Singh, Dhian Singh and Suchet Singh. They were raised to the rank of Raja—the only ones to receive this distinction during the lifetime of Ranjit. Jammu was conferred in fief or *jāgīr* upon the family. The crafty Gulab Singh remained in the hills, ever busy in extending his authority over the neighbouring regions by any means, fair or foul. Dhian Singh occupied the chief place in the *darbār* as the Chief Minister, and the family was sufficiently powerful to transmit the position, after his murder, to his young son Hira Singh.

These brothers, who practically dominated the entire civil administration, were not Sikhs, but Dogrā Rājputs. Similarly, Lal

Singh and Tej Singh, who became the leaders of the army after Ranjit's death, were not Sikhs, but were natives of Upper and East India. Cunningham was of opinion that Ranjit had a dislike for the Sikhs who were less likely to be subservient to one whom they looked upon as an equal member of the *Khālsā* or Sikh Commonwealth. He therefore "sought for strangers whose applause would be more ready if less sincere, and in whom he could repose some confidence as the creatures of his favour".[19] The correctness of this view has been challenged, and the following plea has been put forward in defence of Ranjit: "All that was cultured and refined had disappeared from the Panjab long before Ranjit came into power; therefore in his attempt to establish order out of chaos he had to look for administrators outside the Panjab because his own land was then all but bare of talent".[20] Whatever one may think of this explanation or justification, the fact remains that after the death of Ranjit, his kingdom was dominated by the non-Sikhs who could not be expected to develop or even sympathise with sentiments of Sikh nationality, which alone could be a secure foundation for the building up of a Sikh kingdom. It is difficult to deny that this factor, to a large extent, accounts for the difference in the history of the Marathas and Sikhs after the death, respectively, of Shivaji and Ranjit Singh. The powerful Aurangzeb, with the whole resources of the Mughul empire, devastated the dominions of Shivaji, but could not destroy the Marathas who rose, sphinx-like, out of the ruins, to be a great power The dominions of Ranjit Singh were destroyed within ten years of his death, never to rise again; only a relic of his famous Sikh soldiery remained as the faithful minions of the British who encompassed their ruin

II. POLITICAL CHAOS AFTER THE DEATH OF RANJIT SINGH.

Ranjit Singh died on June 27, 1839, and was succeeded by Kharak Singh, his eldest son. Sher Singh, his reputed son, made a bid for the throne and even sought the intervention of the British, who were now intimately connected with the Sikh affair on account of the joint venture against Afghānistān. But troubles were averted by the prompt action of Dhian Singh. The new King continued the policy of friendship with the English and permitted the British troops, returning from Afghānistān, to pass through the Panjāb. Later, when they again proceeded to Kābul, under General Pollock, to avenge their defeat and disaster, the Sikh army offered valuable aid in carrying the Khyber Pass. This service was gratefully recognized by Lord Ellenborough in his notification of April 19, and his letter to Queen Victoria, dated April 21, 1842.[20a]

Kharak Singh was an imbecile, and the real power was exercised by his son Nao Nihal Singh. The great rivals of the latter were the Rajas of Jammu who jointly held in fief Ladakh and the hill principalities between the rivers Ravi and Jhelum, besides numerous estates in various parts of the Panjāb. Before the death of Ranjit Singh the Rajas of Jammu, as stated above, had usurped the whole function of Government, and one of them, Dhian Singh, had become the Chief Minister of the State. Nao Nihal Singh desired to destroy their power or to reduce it to insignificance. He was fairly successful in this project, when Kharak Singh died on 5 November, 1840. Nao Nihal Singh duly performed the funeral rites of his father, but on his way back, while passing under a covered gateway, a portion of the structure fell down and caused his death Although positive evidence was lacking, it was generally believed that Nao Nihal's death was due to a deliberate conspiracy on the part of the Rajas of Jammu [21] Dhian Singh and the British Agent[22] now supported the claim of Sher Singh, the second son of Ranjit Singh. But Sher Singh was a gay voluptuary, possessing few qualities befitting a king. Besides, his paternity was more than doubtful,[23] and his supporters, the Rajas of Jammu, were odious to the majority of the Sikh chiefs. So one faction, headed by the Sandhanwalia chiefs, supported the claim of Chand Kaur, the widow of Kharak Singh and the mother of Nao Nihal Singh [24]

It was reported that Nao Nihal Singh's widow was with child. and Chand Kaur claimed to rule as Regent on bealf of her expected grandchild The two claimants, supported by opposing factions, sought to secure the help of the British by alluring offers Sher Singh promised to cede to them all the Sikh possessions on the left bank of the Sutlej Rani Chand Kaur, not to be outdone, sent Sardar Ajit Singh Sandhanwalia to the British Agent at Ludhiānā, and was prepared to go to the extent of paying the British one-fourth of the revenues of the Panjāb or ceding the province of Kāshmir.[25] Once more the crisis was averted by Dhian Singh, who agreed to set up an interim government with Rani Chand Kaur as the Regent, assisted by a council of four, including both Sher Singh and Dhian Singh. But these two were not reconciled to this new arrangement, and secretly won over the army by holding out hopes of money-gifts and higher pay. Sher Singh marched on Lahore with the army, and as the Rani refused to surrender, besieged the fort on 16 January, 1841. The garrison bravely resisted for two days. On the third day Dhian Singh returned from Jammu and the troops surrendered. An agreement was reached by which Sher Singh ascended the throne and Dhian Singh became Chief Minister. Chand Kaur retired with

a *jāgīr* for her maintenance, and her chief supporters, the Sandhanwalia Sardars, fled to the British territory, leaving their cash and property worth several lakhs at the mercy of Sher Singh.[26]

Sher Singh's *coup d'etat* with the help of the army proved disastrous to the Sikh State in more ways than one. His government could not meet the payments promised to the army on account of the depleted state of the treasury. The army, conscious of its own strength and the weakness of the King, began to act as if it was the real master of the country. In addition to plundering on a large scale, the soldiers fed fat their private grudge and took vengeance upon various officers who had offended them.[27] "For six to eight weeks", writes the Court historian, "the city of Lahore was turned into a veritable hell."[28] Many houses were plundered and several individuals were seized and slain. The disorders soon spread from the capital to the other parts of the kingdom. General Court had to fly for his life and General Avitabile was so hard pressed that he was ready to abandon his post at Peshāwār and seek safety in Jalālābād. "The Kāshmir troops literally hacked to pieces Col. Mian Singh, the Governor of the Valley. From Mandi and Kulu came in the reports of the murder of Col. Foulkes, from Hazara of the murder of Major Ford, and from Amritsar of the assassination of the garrison commander Sobha Singh."[29]

This was not, however, the only evil. The state of affairs in the Panjāb raised hopes in the minds of Englishmen that the province would soon be added to the growing British dominion. This hope was encouraged by the conduct of the King himself who was ready "to cross the Sutlej and to throw himself on the protection of the Governor-General of India." In 1841 Sher Singh made "overtures to the British Government and was offered an armed interference in his favour. A British force of ten thousand men was ready to move into the Panjāb under Major General Sir James Lumley. But Sher Singh's vacillation and the lateness of the season led to the abandonment of the plan."[29a] It is, therefore, hardly any wonder that the English journals and newspapers in India "were freely discussing the question of launching an attack."[29b] Although it was not known to the Sikhs at the time, concrete proposals to the same effect were made by responsible British officials, to which reference will be made in the next section.

These two evils led to the third and the greatest; the Lahore *darbār*, unable to restore order in the kingdom and apprehensive of danger from the British, took the fatal step of inviting two representatives from each army unit, and held parleys with them. This, leading to an increase in the pay of the soldiers, caused the

situation and, by the middle of 1841, the violence of the Sikh soldiery subsided to a large extent. But the representative bodies of the army, which came to be known as military *panchayats*, developed into a permanent institution and introduced a new element in the body politic which changed the entire outlook of the Sikh army, and brought about a new conception of the Khālsā or Sikh Commonwealth in their mind. The change, which was big with future consequences, is thus described by Cunningham:

"The relation of the army to the state had become wholly altered: it was no longer the willing instrument of an arbitrary and genial government, but it looked upon itself, and was regarded by others, as the representative body of the Sikh people, as the "Khālsā" itself assembled by tribes or centuries to take its part in public affairs. The efficiency of the army as a disciplined force was not much impaired, for a higher feeling possessed the men, and increased alacrity and resolution supplied the place of exact training They were sensible of the advantage of systematic union, and they were proud of their armed array as the visible body of Govind's commonwealth. As a general rule the troops were obedient to their appointed officers, so far as concerned their ordinary military duties, but the position of a regiment, of a brigade, of a division, or of the whole army, relatively to the executive government of the country, was determined by a committee or assemblage of committees termed a "Punch" or "Punchayet" i.e. a jury or committee of five, composed of men selected from each battalion, or each company, in consideration of their general character as faithful Sikh soldiers, or from their particular influence in their native villages."[30]

It may appear somewhat strange that although the Sikh army took the very unusual step of setting up a democratic control within the rank, it never degenerated into a mere rabble without any discipline. It has been pointed out by some writers that this was due to the fact that the decision of the Sikh army was based on some fundamental and basic concepts of the Sikhs. "The Khālsā, as established by Guru Govind Singh, was a community of equals and the highest authority was vested in the *Sarbat Khālsā* or the assembly of the whole Sikh people " The last *Sarbat Khālsā* met in 1805. and since then Ranjit Singh established his supremacy over the whole Sikh community and usurped its functions. His unworthy successors not only lacked his personality but brought about chaos and confusion. leading almost to a collapse of the government. Hence the Sikh soldiery arrogated to themselves the name and function of the *Surbat-i-Khālsā Ji*. When the leading chiefs were merely looking after their own petty interests, or were engaged in endless intrigues.

not only among themselves, but even with the national enemy, the British, "the Army, as the most organised and united body in the community, took upon itself the role of leaders and assumed the functions of the *Sarbat Khālsā*."[31]

This no doubt explains, to a certain extent, the new role played by the army, and we cannot altogether withhold our sympathy from the motive underlying it. Nevertheless it is idle to deny the fact that the change that came over the army contained the seeds of its own destruction and that of the Khālsā.

History has demonstrated again and again, that the "soldiers are very unfit guardians of a legal or even civil constitution," and the deplorable consequences of the *panchayat* system on the Lāhore *darbār* were soon apparent. The army became dictatorial in tone, forced the Government to accept their demands, and thus rendered impossible any organized civil administration. As an inevitable consequence of this, dissensions between political factions became the order of the day and, as the army was the final arbiter in all disputes, to obtain its support at any price was the guiding principle of the leading chiefs. Disgusted by the imperious tone of the army and the haughty and insolent conduct of the soldiers, many leading men of the court were more eager to save their honour and property than safeguard the interests of the commonwealth. Some of them chose the more ignominious course of acting as British agents, and did not scruple even to barter away the independence of their country in order to save it from the rapacity of the army. The Sikh army took the law into their own hands to chastise traitors, and this alienated the other leaders all the more. There was a vicious circle. The Sikh army distrusted the leaders and suspected them as traitors; the leaders dreaded their vengeance, and not unoften, for that very reason, remained indifferent spectators or even tried to save themselves by treachery. It will be hardly an exaggeration to say that the Lāhore *darbār* was composed of individuals, few of whom could ever rise above their narrow selfish interests. Many of them were distinguished by ability of a very high order, but, with a few exceptions, they lacked any sense of nationality or patriotism.

The evil was, no doubt, considerably aggravated by the personal character of the King. Sher Singh was not an imbecile like Kharak Singh, and gave evidence of his ability as a prince during the lifetime of Ranjit. But as a king he proved an utter failure. He did not look to the business of the State, and "for weeks together would be indulging in drinks and dances".[32] In June, 1842, the ex-queen Chand Kaur was beaten to death by her female attendants and

public opinion laid the blame at the door of the Maharaja.[33] The party opposed to Dhian Singh, the Prime Minister, created a serious rift between him and the King, and they got full support from the British who were the avowed enemy of the able Prime Minister. The British Agent, Mr. Clarke, had come to Lāhore to supervise the arrangements in connection with the despatch of relief army to Jalālābād, via Panjāb, after the great disaster of January, 1842. He took advantage of the pro-British attitude of Sher Singh, mentioned above, to ingratiate himself into his favour, and persuaded him to restore to favour the fugitive Sandhanwalia Sardars, Attar Singh and Ajit Singh, who, as stated above, were the sworn enemies of Dhian Singh. At the same time he encouraged the Sandhanwalia Sardars to overcome their fear and return to Lāhore, which they did in November, 1842. On September 15, 1843, Maharaja Sher Singh, his son Pratap Singh, and his Prime Minister Dhian Singh were all shot dead in cold blood by the two Sandhanwalia Sardars, Lahna Singh and Ajit Singh. Mr. Clarke, in inviting the Sandhanwalias, was certainly urged by the motive of removing Dhian Singh from his office, as that minister was hostile to the designs of the British. This he sought to do by creating a serious rift in the Lāhore *darbār* by setting up the two rival groups, almost equally matched, against one another [34] Whether he was responsible for what followed, it is difficult to say. As will be shown in the next section, the conspiracy against the life of the Maharaja, and even the approximate time when the tragedy would happen, were known to the British Governor-General of India

The triumph of the conspirators lasted but a day. As could be expected, the issue was decided by the army. Hira Singh, son of Dhian Singh, gained its adherence by promising higher pay,[35] and stormed the fort of Lahore on 17 September. The defenders, numbering about one thousand, and including the two Sandhanwalia Sardars, were all liquidated But Attar Singh Sandhanwalia fled with his son to the British territory. The events of the three days, September 15 to 17 (1843), may be taken as an ominous forecast of the future of Lahore *darbār* It had lost all physical power and moral prestige, and its existence as an empty show could not continue for long. Another side of the picture was no less ominous. The following lines have pithily drawn the lurid picture without any exaggeration: "Human life seems to have lost its sanctity and value, and a sword, dagger or bullet came to be used freely and without remorse to get rid of one's opponents In less than seventy hours, as many as one thousand men were made to lose their lives—among them being the ruling sovereign, his son, the chief minister of the State, besides numbers of other top-ranking dignitaries."[36]

Dalip Singh, the son of Maharani Jind Kaur, better known as Rani Jindan, whom Maharaja Ranjit Singh married in 1833, was declared as Maharaja by Hira Singh. The Rani was notorious for her licentious character,[37] and hence there was suspicion even about the paternity of Dalip, who was probably born in September, 1838.[38] Nevertheless, the people accepted him as the Maharaja and Rani Jindan as the Regent. Hira Singh, of course, became the Prime Minister. Rani Jindan was a capable and courageous woman, but her amours and intrigues with unworthy persons stood in the way of her playing an effective part in the administration of the country by checking the selfish and ambitious designs of Hira Singh. The rivalry and conflict between the two led to a virtual collapse of the Government. Not long after his accession to power Hira Singh was faced with the opposition of his uncle, Raja Suchet Singh, who grew jealous of his nephew. He lent support to Kashmira Singh and Peshawara Singh, two reputed sons of Ranjit Singh, who revolted against the *darbār*. When their rebellion was crushed, Suchet Singh advanced towards Lāhore. But he was surrounded and killed with his whole party on 27th March, 1844.[39]

But Hira Singh's troubles were not over. Kashmira Singh and Peshawara Singh, after their unsuccessful rebellion, joined Bhai Bir Singh, a Sikh saint who openly excited the people against Hira Singh. Uttar Singh Sandhanwalia also crossed the Sutlej about the end of April, 1844, and joined this group. A pitched battle was fought, in course of which Bir Singh, Kashmira Singh, and Uttar Singh Sandhanwalia lost their lives.[40]

Gulab Singh also felt jealousy towards his nephew and encouraged Peshawara Singh in his claims to the office of the Prime Minister or even to the throne. But the quarrel between Gulab Singh and Hira Singh was soon patched up.[41] Revolts also broke out in many places, but Hira Singh put them down.[41a] Thus Hira Singh and his confidential counsellor, Jalla Pandit, the family priest of the Dogra Rajas, seemed to be all-powerful. Hira Singh removed or undermined the influences of all his rivals, actual or prospective. "Secretly and unsparingly he uprooted the old families; lopped off the Sirdars of note, and office-bearers of long services; and then grafted in their places creatures of his own". Though Jalla Pandit kept the Sikh soldiery in good humour by increasing the pay and allowances of the Sikh soldiers, he secretly diminished their number and recruited an army from the hill provinces.[42] Gulab Singh, though staying in Jammu, helped his nephew Hira Singh, and with his connivance carried away large treasures from Lahore.[43] But Hira Singh soon came into conflict with Rani Jindan. Pandit

Jalla, "in his arrogance, had ventured to use some expressions of impatience and disrespect towards the mother of the Maharaja, and he had habitually treated Jawahir Singh, her brother, with neglect and contempt". The Rani influenced the soldiery to such an extent that by the end of 1844 Hira Singh found his position unbearable. At last, afraid of the Sikh soldiery, he and Jalla fled from Lahore, carrying with them whatever they could lay hands on in the royal treasury. But they were intercepted within a few miles of Lahore and killed (December 21, 1844).[44]

The Rani celebrated this triumph by a round of festivities, but little did she or her advisers perceive how completely the actual power was passing into the hands of the army. Hira Singh's murder was followed by a period of confusion, but the Rani succeeded in securing the office of Prime Minister for her brother Jawahir Singh, "a weak, vain, besotted debauchee". He was formally invested as *Wazir* on 14 May, 1845, and Lal Singh, the paramour of the Rani, became the most influential man in the administration.[45]

The new Prime Minister, however, soon made himself odious to the army, and its *panchayats* now thought of setting up Peshawara Singh as king and Gulab Singh as *Wazir*. Jawahir Singh, being alarmed, got Peshawara Singh murdered by Chatar Singh Atariwala, whose daughter was betrothed to Dalip Singh and of whom more will be heard hereafter. The army was furious at the assassination of Peshawara Singh, their nominee to the throne. "The *Panchayats* of regiments met in Council, and they resolved that Jawahir Singh should die as a traitor to the Commonwealth". On 21 September, 1845, Jawahir Singh was publicly shot in the presence of his sister, the Rani, and Maharaja Dalip Singh.[46] Lal Singh and Tej Singh became, respectively, the Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief.

It was now obvious to everybody that the army was the real ruler, and it has been suggested by many that the Rani, in order to wreak vengeance on the all-powerful army, which she dared not oppose, goaded it to a war with the British in the hope that it will be defeated and destroyed, or at least considerably weakened. Whatever we might think of this, there is no doubt that many chiefs in the Panjāb, including Lal Singh, Tej Singh and Gulab Singh, who occupied the highest positions in the State, were of the same view, and preferred a British Protectorate to independence. Many of them were, no doubt, impelled by the motive of protecting their personal interests, but some might have been influenced by the honest conviction that there was no other way of saving the country from utter ruin. The Lahore *darbār*, since the accession of Dalip Singh, presented a spectacle even more ignoble than that of the preceding

period of four years after the death of Ranjit Singh. A gruesome picture of its transactions from day to day has been revealed by the recent publication of the Panjāb News-letters, covering the period from 30 December, 1843, to 31 October, 1844. These letters were written by the agencies set up by the British Government in the Panjāb for the purpose of collecting news and intelligence of the Lahore *darbār*.

Among the more important features of the political condition in the Panjāb during this brief but eventful period of its history, on which the News-letters throw abundant light, only a few may be noted here. The first is the growing ambition of the Dogra Rajas, Gulab Singh in Jammu and his nephew Hira Singh in Lāhore, to usurp the entire power and authority of the State. Gulab Singh had extended his authority over a vast stretch of territory, including Kāshmir, Chach, Rāwalpindi and other estates, and kept himself in close touch with the military officers and leading Sikh chiefs of Lahore. He increased his own military strength to 50,000 infantry and cavalry, 200 guns and 600 swivels. In addition, he tried to win over the Sikh army of Lahore and create disturbances throughout the Sikh Empire. At the same time he was secretly intriguing with the British against the Sikh Government at Lahore. It was generally believed that he was in league with his nephew, the Prime Minister Hira Singh, and the common object of both was to establish the independent Dogra rule in the Panjāb or at least over a considerable part of it.[47]

Far more important is the light that these News-letters throw on the degenerate condition of the Sikh army, particularly the extreme arrogance, utter lack of discipline, appalling insubordination and constant interference in the affairs of the State, both civil and military. The soldiers' committees frequently formulated their demands and presented them to the Prime Minister in the open *darbār* in the form of ultimatums which he had to accept, though often without any intention to fulfil his promise. Hira Singh openly admitted that "the soldiers are the masters", and the officers meekly confessed that "their men were not under their control" and "whatever the Khālsā wishes it can and will do."[48] The state of things revealed by the News-letters has been thus summed up:

"The most striking though very unfortunate fact which the perusal of these letters brings to view is the loosening of the State's hold upon its fighting forces. Day in and day out wrangling parleys were held between the yielding minister and arrogant Panchas of the army. The language employed by the latter on these occasions is not only devoid of all decorum, but it is positively rude, dicta-

torial and insolent. On more than one occasion, the minister Hira Singh, for fear of the troops, had had to shut himself up in his fortified residence for two days in succession, when the uncontrolled soldiery freely laid their hands upon the person and property of the rich and the poor citizens of Lahore. The civil government was, indeed, reduced to a state of utter helplessness."[49]

The News-letters refer to a number of concrete instances of the overbearing conduct and defiant attitude of the soldiers. They turned out Generals from the cantonment and looted their property, left station at their own sweet will, disobeyed the orders of the highest civil and military authorities, and often indulged in lawless activities, such as plundering shops and burning them, robbing passers-by as well as Government treasury, etc. In order to appease the unruly soldiery the Prime Minister gave them presents and donations in the shape of cash, golden bracelets, and golden medals. Special rewards were given to troops and officers who had defeated, and sometimes murdered, leading chiefs hostile to the Prime Minister, such as Jawahir Singh, brother of Rani Jindan, and Suchet Singh, one of the Dogra Rajas.[50]

Thus towards the end of 1845, the Panjāb showed the spectacle of a boy king under a licentious queen-regent and an equally licentious and treacherous Prime Minister; an unruly, arrogant and unscrupulous army posing as the all-powerful dictator in both civil and military affairs of the State; and a group of selfish chiefs who looked only after their own interest and cared little for the true welfare of the State. The mighty fabric, which Maharaja Ranjit Singh had reared up with so much toil, showed visible signs of crumbling within six years of his death. Left to themselves, the Sikhs, under an able leader, might have survived this crisis and rehabilitated the kingdom. But that was not to be. Just when they were passing through the worst phases of their history, the British seized the opportunity to round up their empire by adding to it the last remaining independent State of India.

III. THE BRITISH INTRIGUE

The British were not uninterested spectators of the chaos and confusion in the Panjāb following upon the death of Ranjit Singh. The disorganized state of the government and the army led them to entertain high hopes of the destruction of the Sikhs even at the moment when the latter were acting as faithful allies in the Afghān expedition. Macnaghten, the British Political Agent at Kābul, "pronounced the treaties with Lahore to be at an end, and he wanted to annex Peshāwār to the Afghān sway"[51] which *at that time* meant

practically British sway. "The British Government in Calcutta rebuked this hasty conclusion, but cheered itself with the prospect of eventually adding the Derajat of the Indus, as well as Peshāwār, to the unproductive Dooranee kingdom, without any breach of faith towards the Sikhs; for it was considered that their dominions might soon be rent in two by the Sindhanwala Sirdars and the Jummoo Rajas. The British Agent on the Sutlej did not think the Lāhore empire so near its dissolution in that mode, and confident in his own dexterity, in the superiority of his troops, and in the greatness of the English name, he proposed to march to Sikh capital with 12,000 men, to beat and disperse a rebel army four times more numerous, to restore order, to strengthen the sovereignty of Sher Singh, and take the cis-Sutlej districts and forty lakhs of rupees in coin as the price of his aid. This promptitude made the Maharaja think himself in danger of his life at the hands of his subjects, and of his kingdom at the hands of his allies; nor was the Governor-General prepared for a virtual invasion, although he was ready to use force if a large majority of the Sikhs as well as the Maharaja himself desired such intervention. After this, the disorders in the army near Lahore gradually subsided; but the opinion got abroad that overtures had been made to the eager English; and so far were the Sikh soldiery from desiring foreign assistance, that Lehna Singh Sindhanwala was imprisoned by his own men in the Mundee hills, on a charge of conspiracy with his refugee brother to introduce the supremacy of strangers."[52]

The suspicions and hatred of the Sikhs were further roused by the strange conduct of Major Broadfoot, a British officer, of whom more will be heard hereafter. He was charged to convey the families of Shah Shuja and Shah Zaman to Kābul. He entered the Panjāb in April, 1841, when the mutinous spirit of the Sikh army was spreading from the capital to the provinces, and he marched through the Panjāb with demonstrations of force, as if he was passing through a hostile territory, though his apprehensions had not even a plausible foundation.[53]

There can be no question that the British had been seriously thinking of the conquest of the Panjāb and making plans for the same, as soon as death had removed the great Maharaja Ranjit Singh. This is also quite clear from the letters written by Mrs. Henry Lawrence dated May 26, 1841: "There seems no doubt", wrote she, "that next cold weather will decide the long suspended question of occupying the Punjaub; Henry, both in his civil and military capacity, will probably be called to take part in whatever goes on." In another letter, dated June 5, she even discusses "the disposition of

the troops invading the Panjāb, and the probable commanders of the three invading columns."[64] When, in October 1841, as mentioned above, the British Agent on the Sutlej had proposed "to march on Lāhore with 12,000 men to restore order, the Calcutta papers teemed with plans for conquering the Panjāb."[55]

Thus while the British authorities were under the impression that they were secure in their virtual mastery over Afghānistān, they were deliberately hatching plans for the conquest of the Panjāb. The plans were temporarily upset by the revolution in Afghānistān and the disastrous retreat of the British army from Kābul, but the idea was never given up.

Even while a Sikh army of 15,000 was fighting in the Khyber Pass to enable their allies, the British, to recover their prestige after the great disaster, and detachments of Sikh troops "were cheerfully covering the rearguard of the Second British Army in Afghānistān, occupying the difficult hill heights of their passage and dragging the guns for them", the British Government was busy making preparations for the conquest of the Panjāb, and plans were being made to stab the Maharaja in the back by corrupting his officers. It was deliberately urged by Sir Henry Lawrence, in January 1842, that "a consideration should be offered to the Rajahs Dhian Singh and Gulab Singh for their assistance, they alone in the Panjāb being now able to give aid." "We need such men as the Rajah and General Avitabile, and should bind them to us", said Lawrence, "by the only tie they recognise—self-interest". He explained more specifically the bribes to be offered to them—"the Rajahs (to be) secured in their territory, even with additions", and General Avitabile, "guaranteed our aid in retiring with his property". "Other Sirdars aiding us cordially", added Lawrence, were to "be specially and separately treated for".[56] Thus was begun the active British intrigue with the important chiefs and leading persons in the Panjāb. The British began with the non-Sikh personalities,—Rajas Gulab Singh and Dhian Singh, two Dogra (Rajput) Chiefs, and Lal Singh and Tej Singh, two chiefs of British India belonging to Rohtas and Meerut. There is clear evidence that Gulab Singh was offered the kingdoms of Jammu and Kāshmir,—the nature of the bribes to others is not certain.

While attempt was being made to corrupt and win over leading personalities in the Lahore court, brisk preparations were going on to equip the army of invasion. It is significant to note that immediately after his nomination as the Governor-General of India, Lord Ellenborough was busy making plans for the invasion of the Panjāb On October 15 and 26, 1841, he wrote to the Duke of

Wellington asking for his "opinion as to the general principles upon which a campaign against that country should be conducted" and the "best mode of attacking the Panjāb". In reply the Duke desired Ellenborough, in his letter of April 2, 1842, to collect boats for the formation of a bridge on the Sutlej for transporting British troops across that river.[57]

Lord Ellenborough lost no time in commencing active preparations. He informed the Duke on June 7, 1842, that he had, after consultation with the Commander-in-Chief, issued an order for the assembling of an army of reserve, totalling 15,000 men, at Karnāl or Firozpur in November. Three other measures of Ellenborough, namely, the conquest of Sindh, the new treaty with Sindhia, and the annexation, in 1843, of the Sikh State of Kaithal (38 miles west of Karnāl) on the death of the ruler without leaving a male heir, were all motivated by the impending contest with the Sikhs. The State of Kaithal was not granted to the chief by the British, but still it was treated as a lapse.[57a]

In the meanwhile the Lahore court was full of intrigues which culminated in the death of Maharaja Sher Singh, his son, and his Prime Minister on September 15, 1843. Sher Singh, as stated above, was between two fires. The fear of his own chiefs and subjects inclined him to turn for aid to the British, but he was fully aware of their designs upon his kingdom. It is difficult to deny that the British agents had a large share in fomenting the troubles and intrigues in the Lahore *darbār*. While Lawrence was egging on Dhian Singh, the Prime Minister, and his brother Gulab Singh, the governor of Kāshmir and Jammu, against their master on the promise of ceding these territories, Mr. Clarke, the Political Agent on the Panjāb frontier, "repaired to Lahore to support Maharaja Sher Singh against his own Prime Minister".[58] Ventura, an Italian, who was in the service of Bonaparte and then became a General under Ranjit Singh, had been recently to France and met King Louis Philippe before his return to Lahore. The Duke of Wellington warned Ellenborough, in a letter dated February 4, 1843, of a possible alliance between the French and the Sikhs. Ellenborough thereupon established a friendly contact with General Ventura who kept him regularly informed of the news of the Lahore court.[59]

Ellenborough had thus an intimate knowledge of the intrigues at the Lahore *darbār*. In a letter dated May 11, 1843, he wrote:

"General Ventura is with the Maharaja Sher Singh and it is clear to me that, relying on his support, the Maharajah will take the first occasion of cutting off his Minister Dhian Singh. This Dhian

Singh knows and is prepared for. The break up of the Punjāb will probably begin with murder".[60]

In course of three months he changed his view and thought that the victim would be Sher Singh himself, rather than his Prime Minister. He wrote to the Duke on August 12, 1843, that "the affairs of the Punjab will probably receive their *denouement* from the death of Sher Singh".[61] His prophecies all proved to be true, for, as stated above, on September 15, 1843, Sher Singh, his son Pratap Singh, as well as the Prime Minister Dhian Singh were all murdered by the Sandhanwalia Sardars, Attar Singh and his nephew Ajit Singh. These Sardars, partisans of Chand Kaur, had both fled to the British territory immediately after the accession of Sher Singh. But Mr. Clarke, the British Political Agent at Ludhiānā, persuaded the Maharaja not only to permit them to return, but also to restore their confiscated *jāgīrs* and property (May, 1843). Two other imprisoned members of the family were also set at liberty. They were all involved in the plot, and strong suspicion, therefore, rests upon the British, as being indirect accessories to the foul murders. Lord Ellenborough's letters show that he had fairly definite knowledge of the conspiracy. On September 20, 1843, he wrote: "The Maharajah of Lahore is pulling his house down upon his head; the catastrophe was nearly taking place three weeks ago, but it is deferred."[62] Such intimate knowledge of details can hardly be regarded as a guess work. That the British had full knowledge of the plot can hardly be doubted. But it is more difficult to say definitely if they had any direct share in it. The following comment on these murders in a London Paper, the *British Friend of India*, in December, 1843, sums up the utmost that can be said: "We have no proof that Company instigated all the king-killing which has been perpetrated in the Punjab since Runjeet died..... We must say we smell a rat".[63] It should be pointed out that this was written by one who had no knowledge of the letters of Ellenborough and Lawrence which testify to the former's knowledge of the conspiracy and the latter's intrigues with the officers of the Lahore court.

Lord Ellenborough now anticipated a plain sailing, and was elated at the idea of establishing British authority in the Panjāb without any fight. To the Duke of Wellington he wrote on October 20, 1843: "Heera Singh (the son and successor of Dhian Singh as Prime Minister) has no real authority.......Gulab Singh remains in the Hills (Kāshmir and Jammu), either in sickness, in grief, or in policy. He is securing himself there. Heera Singh will probably soon fly to Jammu. Then a pure Sikh Government will be formed in the plains and a Rajput Government in the Hills, and Multan

may perhaps break loose all connection with the Sikhs. Ventura anticipates a long anarchy, from which the only ultimate refuge will be in our protection. I agree with him....... The time cannot be very distant when the Panjāb will fall into our management." To the Queen also Ellenborough conveyed, on the same date, the happy news "that the ultimate tendency of the late events at Lahore is, without any effort on our part, to bring the plains first, and at somewhat later period the hills, under our protection or control". The hills would come a little later because, for the time being at least, Kāshmir and Jammu must be handed over to Gulab Singh as the promised 'consideration' for his assistance, as Henry Lawrence put it. Gulab Singh had already begun the work. Ellenborough wrote to the Queen on February 16, 1844: "In the Hills, Raja Gulab Singh is extending his power with usual unscrupulous disregard of the rights of others and of the supremacy of the State he pretends to serve. This conduct, however, makes him very odious to the Sikhs at Lahore".[64]

Lord Ellenborough's anticipations, however, did not prove true. There was no civil war in the Panjāb and, as he himself wrote to the Duke on September 20, 1843, and to the Queen two months later, there was no anti-British feeling in the Panjāb. "There is no movement against us, nor is there any prospect of any, unless a complete break-up should send plunderers against us". Even as late as July 14, 1844, he wrote that there was no chance of disturbance of peace in the Panjāb.[65]

Nevertheless, Ellenborough was busy equipping his army for the eventual fight, and even in February, 1844, he actually fixed the date, 15th November, 1845, on which he hoped the army would be ready for any operation in the Panjāb.[66] It must be regarded as a very wonderful coincidence that the war actually broke out in December, 1845. But Ellenborough had left India in the meantime, being recalled by the Court of Directors. His successor, Hardinge, who joined his post in July, 1844, continued his policy and considerably added to the strength of the army on the Panjāb frontier.

The total strength of the British army on the frontier stations was about eighteen thousand men and 66 guns when Ellenborough left. During the sixteen months that followed, Hardinge increased it by nearly twenty-three thousand men and 28 guns, bringing up the total, available at the outbreak of the war, to more than forty thousand men and 94 guns.[67]

Ellenborough had informed the Duke in a letter dated May 9, 1844, that by the end of December there would be on the Sutlej "seventy boats of about thirty-five tons each, all exactly similar and

each containing everything necessary for its equipment as a pontoon ... Besides these, fifty-six pontoons will be ready for use in Sindh All these are in hand at Bombay". These fifty-six pontoons were brought up to Firozpur by Hardinge's order, and special instructions were issued that their real object was to be kept secret even at the risk of prevarication.[68]

Shortly after Lord Hardinge assumed the office of Governor-General (July, 1844), events moved fast in Lahore. Reference has been made above to the internal disorder which set in after Maharaja Dalip Singh, a boy of five, was proclaimed king, and the chain of tragic events by which Missar Lal Singh, a Poorbea Brahmin of Rohtas, widely believed to be a paramour of Rani Jindan,[69] became Prime Minister, and Sardar Tej Singh, another Poorbea Brahmin of Meerut. became Commander-in-Chief (September, 1845). Both of these had been carrying on intrigues with the British and assured them of their help, their desire being to be upheld as the ministers of a dependent kingdom by grateful conquerors Lal Singh corresponded regularly with Major Broadfoot, the newly appointed Political Agent, and Peter Nicholson, his agent at Firozpur Gulab Singh also wrote to Broadfoot, placing his own services and those of the other hill Chiefs at the disposal of the British [70] The appointment of Major Broadfoot as the Political Agent by Hardinge, on the recommendation of Ellenborough, was a significant move He was a sworn enemy of the Sikhs and, only thirty months before, had made a stormy passage through their country. He now actively engaged himself in intrigues of which he was a past master In addition to Gulab Singh, Tej Singh and Lal Singh, he conspired also with the Governor of Multān. Broadfoot won him over and assured Sir Charles Napier that the Governor of Multān would defend Sindh with his provincials against the Sikhs [71] He took steps to create dissensions in the Lahore *darbār*. This is clearly proved by an entry in his confidential Persian Office Diary, on 26th March, 1845, to the following effect.

Genda Singh, the *Mu'tamad* of the Raja of Nābhā, was sent for and Broadfoot told him: "You go to Lahore as the *Mu'tamad* of the Raja, stay there and inform us in detail about the state of affairs there, spread hatred and discord in that State in whatever way it can be done and suggest the entry of the British Government (in the country). ... The *Sarkar* (The British Government) shall bestow favours upon you and consider it as an act of great loyalty of the Raja of Nabha". The man, however, refused to do the ignoble task and so Broadfoot complained to the Raja of Nābhā and desired that

Genda Singh should be punished and his son employed for the purpose.[72]

Broadfoot also gave great provocations to the Sikhs by his manifold acts of arrogance. One of his first acts was to declare the cis-Sutlej territories, belonging to the King of Lahore, to be under British protection.[73] Acting on this principle he interfered authoritatively, and by a display of force, in the affairs of the Sikh territory to the east of the Sutlej. One incident may be quoted to show the nature of his overbearing and imperious attitude. Lal Singh, a Judge in Lahore Service, crossed the Sutlej and came to Talwandi, in the Lahore territory, on official duty. Broadfoot "roughly and very peremptorily ordered the Sikh party back over the river. Lal Singh, not willing to risk a collision, obeyed, returned to the river and embarked his men. But Broadfoot, not satisfied with this, followed them in person... insisted on capturing them At least one shot was fired. The Sikh leaders were captured and detained". Campbell, who narrates this incident, adds: "The shot then fired has been described as the first in the Sikh War".[74] As a matter of fact, many British officials believed that but for Broadfoot there would have been no war with the Sikhs. This feeling was so deep-rooted that, looking at the dead body of Broadfoot, his own subordinate, Robert N Cust, remarked: "There lay he, the prime mover, by many considered the cause, of this war now commencing".[75]

The Sikh Government had all along been maintaining friendly relations with the British. Acute differences arose occasionally; for instance, over the grant of a village by the Chief of Kulu hills to the British Government; the connivance at the escape of the Sandhanwalia Chief Attar Singh, a known enemy of Lahore *darbār*, from his asylum at Thānesar in British territory to join the rebel Bhai Singh, mentioned above; and also the refusal of the British Government to hand over the treasure left by the deceased Dogra Chief Suchet Singh at his house at Firozpur. But these led to no untoward consequences. Far more serious causes of estrangement between the Sikh and the British were the new military arrangements and movements of British troops towards the close of 1843, when extra British troops were stationed at Ambālā, Ludhiānā and Firozpur As a counter-measure, Hira Singh sent troops to Kasur. The British Government strongly objected to the advance of Sikh troops towards the Sutlej. But the Sikh troops were not withdrawn until the British troops moved to Sindh.[76] But the British fortifications at Firozpur caused widespread panic and resentment which are revealed in the News-letters of the time.

"Another cause of annoyance to the Lahore Darbar was given by the news as early as 1 January 1844 that the British Government was erecting a fort at Ferozepur. Later reports stated that it was a magazine, and that military stores were continuously arriving there. On 31 January news was received to the effect that 19 heavy guns had been mounted in the new fort. A week later it was reported that more than 20 guns and immense quantities of ammunition were collected there. About the middle of May when the harvesting of the winter crop was not yet over, the English commenced buying grain in large quantities, and stored it mostly at Ferozepur. Towards the end of May they began collecting big supplies of fodder also. Hira Singh issued orders that nobody to the north of the Sutlej should sell anything to the English. A report received on 1 June stated that "the English commandant at Ferozepur had directed the zamindars not to sow any land for an autumn crop as a very large army was to be assembled after the rains". Further, the Sikh newswriter at Ferozepur wrote that "the English proposed to build a fort between the town and the cantonment of Ferozepore, and also another cantonment in the neighbourhood."[77] The Sikhs were fully aware of the fact that the British troops were kept in readiness at a large number of cantonments near the frontier of the Panjāb. The British, of course, gave out that their preparations were merely defensive in character, but as the Sikhs did not entertain any aggressive design against the British they did not put much faith or value on such declarations. They had witnessed the gradual extension of the British empire in India, culminating in the recent conquest of Sindh, and they could not be blamed if they regarded the British preparations as offensive rather than defensive in character. In particular, the bridge of boats across the Sutlej and establishment of supply depots at or near Firozpur could only be looked upon as preparations for the invasion of the Panjāb.

The Sikh alarm at the military preparations of the British was further increased by the utterances of some British leaders. The Sikhs had read translation of a speech by Sir Charles Napier, published in the *Delhi Gazette*, stating that the British were going to war with the Sikhs.[78] Napier's actions pointed to the same direction. On a nominal pretext, he sent the wing of a regiment to Kushmor on the border between Sindh and the Panjāb in the summer of 1845. It was known that he was anxious to station a considerable body of troops there. The Sikhs looked upon the prompt measures of the conqueror of Sindh as one more proof of the desire to bring about a war with the Panjāb.[79] Broadfoot's activities justified their fears, for he behaved as if hostilities had already begun with the

Sikhs.[80] It is also likely that the Sikhs got an inkling of the secret plans of the British to invade their territory at a suitable opportunity. Cunningham thus sums up the whole position: "But it would be idle to suppose the Lahore government ignorant of a scheme which was discussed in official correspondence, and doubtless in private society, or of the previous desire of Sir Alexander Burnes to bestow the same tract on Dost Mahommed Khan; and the Sikh authorities must at least have had a lively remembrance of the English offer of 1843 to march upon their capital, and to disperse their army. Again, in 1844 and 1845, the facts were whispered abroad and treasured up, that the English were preparing boats at Bombay to make bridges across the Sutlej, that troops in Sindh were being equipped for a march on Mooltan, and that the various garrisons of the north-west provinces were being gradually reinforced, while some of them were being abundantly supplied with the munitions of war as well as with troops. None of these things were communicated to the Sikh government, but they were nevertheless believed by all parties, and they were held to denote a campaign, not of defence, but of aggression".[81]

The observations of Cunningham are fully corroborated and supplemented by News-letters of the period. In spite of all these ominous signs of the aggressive designs of the British and the provocations given by Broadfoot and other British agents, the Sikhs—the army, the Government and the people—gave no provocation to the British. Indeed, their conduct was so unexpected that the British were at a loss to find out a *casus belli*. In his letter to Ellenborough, dated January 23, 1845, Hardinge wrote: "But on what plea could we attack the Punjab? ... Self-preservation may require the dispersion of this Sikh army ... but ... how are we to justify the seizure of our friend's territory who in our adversity assisted us to retrieve our affairs".[82]

The long anticipated date of the completion of the British preparations for the invasion of the Panjāb (September, 1845) was drawing near, and yet the Sikhs gave no excuse for hostile actions. Hardinge wrote to Ellenborough on October 23, 1845: "The Punjab must however be Sikh or British ... The delay is merely a postponement of the settlement of the question; at the same time we must bear in mind that as yet no cause of war has been given."[83]

From this great dilemma Hardinge was saved by Broadfoot. He set in motion his secret machinery so that the Sikh army might begin the hostile movement.

The Sikh army was in a state of great suspension and uncertainty. The brisk military preparations of the British made one

section eager to take the offensive, as a superior military strategy, but the rest desired peace. Besides, the Queen-mother and the Sardars were against the policy of aggression. It was at this crisis that Broadfoot's hand was clearly seen. Hardinge wrote on 30 September, 1845, that the Sikh army desired peace, but the Chiefs, Lal Singh and Tej Singh, urged them on to war.[84] This, in a way, proved to be the deciding factor. Cunningham observes that "had the shrewd committees of the (Sikh) armies observed no military preparation on the part of the English, they would not have heeded the insidious exhortations of such mercenary men as Lal Singh and Tej Singh."[85] These goaded the army[86] to move to the Sutlej, evidently with the knowledge, if not under the instructions, of Major Broadfoot".[87]

Not only Cunningham but even Captain Peter Nicholson, the British Political Assistant at Firozpur, held the same opinion. Writing to his chief, Major Broadfoot, on November 23, 1845, he says that when he learnt that the Sikh Prime Minister, Lal Singh, consented to a hostile march of the Sikh army against his allies, and Tej Singh and Gulab Singh, "supposed to be friendly to us, the most active in bringing that march about", the doubt did occur to him "whether the Durbar might not be consenting to the march of the army against us with your knowledge".[88] The subsequent conduct of Tej Singh, who commanded the Sikh army, leaves no doubt that he was acting throughout in the interest of the British.

The Sikh army finally declared that they desired peace, but if the British troops marched from their stations to Ludhiānā and Firozpur, they would march too; if not, that each power should keep its own territory in peace. This was communicated by Broadfoot himself to the Government of India on September 26.[89] It is a fact admitted by the Governor-General Hardinge in his letter dated 31 December, 1845, that he issued orders on December 7 and 8, "to move up on 11 December the British force from Ambala, Meerut and other stations in the rear, and that up to this time no infantry and artillery had been reported to have left Lahore, nor had a single Sikh soldier crossed the Sutlej."[90] According to Cust, who had accompanied the British force at Ambala, it had left that station on December 6.[91]

It would not perhaps be wrong to imagine, in the context of the letter of Broadfoot, just mentioned, that the movement of the British troops was deliberately designed to incite the Sikh army to cross the Sutlej, and thus give the long looked for *casus belli.*

On 13th December the Sikh army crossed the Sutlej, and were encamped in the territory which belonged to the Sikh Government. Technically, therefore, they had not yet invaded British territory. But as soon as this news was received, the Governor-General, Hardinge, issued his historic proclamation declaring war on the Sikhs. It is unnecessary to discuss at length the statements and assertions made in this proclamation which, like most declarations of war issued by belligerents, are belied by actual facts.[92] But it is interesting to note that even Hardinge, *at heart*, was not convinced of the justice of his cause. Robert N. Cust writes in his Journal:

December 18th ... I rode behind the Governor-General and we sat under a tree to await the infantry. The Governor-General remarked: "Will the people of England consider this an actual invasion of our frontier and a justification of war?" Cust himself regarded it as "the first British invasion of the independent kingdom of the Panjab,"[93] and several other English writers have held that the British were the aggressors. Campbell writes in his *Memoirs*:[94]

"It is recorded in the annals of history, or what is called history, which will go down to posterity, that the Sikh army invaded British territory in pursuance of a determination to attack us. And most people will be very much surprised to hear that they did nothing of the kind. They made no attack on our outlying cantonments, nor set foot in our territory. What they did was to cross the river and to entrench themselves in their own territory".

No unprejudiced critic, conversant with all the relevant facts, can deny the truth of this statement. It is therefore difficult to accept the view, categorically expressed by a very high authority, that the "Government of India on this occasion was guiltless of provocation".[94a] It is high time that the false propaganda about Sikh aggression which has run on for a century should be exposed and finally put to an end.

IV. THE FIRST SIKH WAR

It appears from Hardinge's despatch to the Secret Committee, dated 31 December, 1845, that the actual decision to cross the Sutlej was taken by the Sikh army all on a sudden. Up to December 12, no infantry and artillery had left Lahore, but on the very next day they crossed the Sutlej. Evidently, they wanted to take the British at disadvantage by a sudden attack on Firozpur. This was a sound military strategy, but was foiled by the treachery of Lal Singh. He wrote to Captain Peter Nicholson, the Assistant Agent at Firozpur: "I have crossed with the Sikh army, you know my friendship for the British. Tell me what to do". Nicholson ans-

wered: "Do not attack Firozpur. Halt as many days as you can, and then march towards the Governor-General". Lal Singh did so, and Firozpur was saved. "Had he attacked", says Ludlow, "our garrison of 8000 men would have been destroyed and the victorious 60,000 would have fallen on Sir Henry Hardinge, who had then but 8,000".[95] More light is thrown on this episode by Col. Mouton, a French officer in the Sikh army.

"Raja Lal Singh rushed up and robbed the ardour of Sickes a great deal by assuring them of the defection of 4 Indian battalions in the English army which would surely join them. Meanwhile he hastened to send an urgent message to Captain Nicholson, 'Charge d' affairs' at Ferozepour, telling him that it was without the order of his government that the army had crossed the river, and that the generals had been dragged against their wishes, that sixty thousand men were going to march on Ferozepour, which had not even six thousand to defend itself and ended by requesting the captain to advise him in the matter. Nicholson replied suggesting to Raja Lal Singh to detach from the army a corps of twenty-five thousand men which he should bring to meet the Commander-in-Chief, who was arriving by the route of Ambala, and that probably these twenty-five thousand men would be defeated—the rest of the army crossing the river in disorder. This treason saved the English from a sure defeat".[96]

This fits in with the actual course of events.[97] Lal Singh made an excuse that 'he wanted to fight the Commander-in-Chief and considered anyone else below his notice'. So Lal Singh waited and then advanced to attack the main British army under the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Hugh Gough, at Mudki. After the battle had begun, Lal Singh, according to plan, deserted the army, leaving his soldiers to fight as best they could. Thus, deserted by their Commander in the thick of the fight, the Sikh force was repulsed.

At the next battle at Firoz Shah (Firuzshuhr), the Commander-in-Chief of the British forces, evidently relying on the treachery of their friends Lal Singh and Tej Singh, who led the Sikh army, took things easily, and attacked it on December 21, 1845, about an hour before sunset. The Sikhs had evidently profited by experience, and gave a good account of themselves. The British advance was checked and the Sikhs maintained such a steady fire that the British ranks fell back with heavy loss. As darknes descended on the battlefield, there were chaos and confusion in the British army, and so great was the panic and despair, that suggestions were made for retreat and even unconditional surrender. Even the Governor-General, Hardinge, who was present in the battlefield, took the worst view and 'thought

it was all up'. He sent instructions to Mudki for destruction of all State Papers and ordered his son, who was his Private Secretary, to proceed to Firozpur. To him he gave his sword, which was a present from the Duke of Wellington and once belonged to Napoleon, remarking that "if the day were lost, he must fall".

The British were nervous because they could not fully rely upon their friends Lal Singh and Tej Singh. But these traitors were true to their plighted words with the British. If they had advanced during the night, they could have easily routed the British army, heavily reduced in number and short of ammunitions. Instead of doing that, Lal Singh quietly left the battlefield with most of his guns and men during the night. The rest of the Sikh army was easily put to flight on the morning of the 22nd. There was a fresh reserve force under Tej Singh, and the Sikh soldiers urged him to fall upon the English at daybreak. But being fully apprised of the hopeless condition of his "friends", he fled away with his troops to save the British army which was absolutely at the mercy of the Sikhs. Thus was the battle lost to the Sikhs at Firoz Shah, and the British were saved from sure destruction by the treachery of Lal Singh and Tej Singh.

Even then the British were in a perilous condition. The troops were exhausted, and the ammunitions nearly spent. Sir Hugh Gough had to wait for reinforcements of fresh troops, guns, and ammunitions. Tej Singh and Lal Singh, true to their friendship, did not take advantage of the situation to attack the British army, and quietly waited for a month. But at this time a loyal Sikh Sardar, Ranjodh Singh Majithia, crossed the Sutlej and burnt a portion of the cantonment at Ludhiānā. Sir Harry Smith, while proceeding to relieve Ludhiānā, was surprised at Baddowal (January 21, 1846). His losses in men were very heavy, and even his baggage and hospital stores were captured by the Sikhs. He was saved by the timely arrival of a British detachment. About a week later, he gained some success in a battle at Aliwal on January 28. Contradictory views have been held of this battle. Contemporary official despatches describe it as a well-contested engagement with the Sikhs, numbering about 20,000, in which Sir H. Smith gained a "decisive" or "complete" victory.[98] Others, also contemporaries, however, refer to it as a mere skirmish with some retreating Sikhs at Aliwal. This was magnified into a great victory in order to retrieve the position and reputation of Sir Harry Smith, a veteran of the Peninsular War who had fought at Waterloo and was an old companion of the Governor-General. As some eye-witnesses said: "Aliwal was the battle of the despatch, for none of us knew we had fought a battle

until the particulars appeared in a document ... a few shots, and the charge of a squadron or two in pursuit of a host of retreating Sikhs were magnified into a great combat".[99]

With the exception of the minor incidents at Baddowal and Aliwal (January 28, 1846), the British enjoyed a much needed respite, thanks to the treachery of Lal Singh and Tej Singh. During the interval the third arch-conspirator, Gulab Singh, appeared on the scene, ostensibly as an agent of the Lahore *darbār*, but really to make plans, in concert with the other two, for handing over the Panjāb to the British. The plot was laid with the Governor-General, then encamped at Firozpur, in the first week of February, 1846, that the Sikh army should be defeated in the battlefield and when beaten, it should be openly abandoned by its own government. The British would then cross the Sutlej unopposed, and enter Lahore as victors, on condition that they would not destroy the Sikh sovereignty at Lahore.[100]

As the Sikh army was not amenable to the orders of the *darbār* at Lahore, arrangements were made by the traitors to ensure its defeat. Lal Singh regularly supplied to the British information about the disposition of the army, and Gulab Singh stopped sending rations and supplies to the army. The British guns began to arrive on February 7, and the battle of Sobrāon was fought on the 10th The British took the offensive, but the Sikhs repulsed three successive attacks. At this juncture Tej Singh and Lal Singh fled from the battlefield. Some Sikh leaders fought heroically, but having no commander to direct, and being assailed on all sides, with no hope of reinforcement, the Sikhs were forced to fall back on the Sutlej. In the meantime, Lal Singh and Tej Singh had crossed the Sutlej and then broken the bridge of boats to ensure the annihilation of the army. Actually a large number of Sikhs were drowned in the river in their attempts to cross it History perhaps does not record another instance of such base treachery on the part of the commanders of an army.

During the same night (February 10-11, 1846) a reserve British force crossed the Sutlej near Firozpur, and without any opposition reached Lahore on February 20. On March 9 a treaty was concluded at Lahore. The terms of this treaty were as follows:[101]

1. (a) The British annexed the Jullundur Doāb to their dominions.

   (b) In lieu of part payment of the expenses of war, they took possession of the entire hill country between the Beas and the Indus, to be alienated to Gulab Singh in

independent sovereignty, recognized by Maharaja Dalip Singh.

(c) 50 lakhs of Rupees were to be paid to the British on or before the ratification of the treaty.

2. The Sikh army was to be reduced to 25 battalions of infantry (800 each) and 12,000 cavalry.

3. All guns used in the war were to be surrendered to the British.

4. British troops were to be allowed free passage through the Panjāb when necessary.

5. The British Government was not to interfere in the internal administration of the Lahore State.

Two days later, some Articles of Agreement were drawn up,[102] ostensibly at the request of the *darbār*, but really to strengthen the British hold on the country. These provided that an adequate British force would be stationed at Lahore till the end of 1846. As the Maharaja Dalip Singh was a boy of seven years and a half, these two treaties were signed by seven chiefs. These included the traitors Lal Singh and Tej Singh, whom the British recognized as chief men of the State and invested with great authority. The third was an agent of the other traitor, Gulab Singh, and four other persons were associated with them merely to give the body a representative character. Gulab Singh got his promised reward of sovereignty over Kāshmir and Jammu on payment of fifty lakhs in cash, which he had removed from the Lahore treasury with the help of his nephew, Hira Singh, while the latter was Prime Minister, as noted before.

A treaty was concluded on March 16, 1846, recognizing Maharaja Gulab Singh independent sovereign of Kāshmir. Many have questioned the justice and propriety of this act. Thus Cunningham remarks: "The arrangement was a dexterous one, if reference be only had to the policy of reducing the power of the Sikhs; but the transaction scarcely seems worthy of the British name and greatness, and the objections become stronger when it is considered that Gulab Singh agreed to pay sixty-eight lakhs of rupees (680,000 lbs.), as a fine to his paramount, before the war broke out, and that the custom of the East as well as of the West requires the feudatory to aid his lord in foreign war and domestic strife. Golab Singh ought thus to have paid the deficient million of money as a Lahore subject, instead of being put in possession of Lahore provinces as an independent Prince".[103]

Even Ellenborough questioned the policy of rewarding what he termed Gulab Singh's treachery. But Hardinge gave the crushing

reply that he could not go back upon what had previously been promised to him.[104] It must be said to the credit (or discredit?) of the victorious Governor-General that he amply rewarded the traitors who served him so well. One of them, however, could not long enjoy the ill-gotten gains of base treachery. Lal Singh, who was installed as Prime Minister, grew jealous of Gulab Singh whose reward was much larger than his own So he instigated the Governor of Kāshmir, Shaikh Imamuddin, not to hand over the valley to Gulab Singh. Sir Henry Lawrence marched to Kāshmir with troops when Imamuddin produced evidence to show that he acted under instructions of Lal Singh. Lal Singh was tried in open Court at Lahore and found guilty unanimously. He was exiled and his *jāgīrs* were forfeited (December, 1846).[105]

Hardinge had no intention of losing his grip on the Panjāb. He had postponed an outright annexation in order to make it easier by gradually reducing the strength of the Sikhs. The loss of territory and the reduction of troops were the first steps in weakening the strength of the Lahore *darbār*. The Sardars and the Maharani had agreed to the retention of British troops only for a year on condition that the British Government would not interfere in any way in the internal administration of the State But, in violation of the treaty, the Resident, in practice, exercised unlimited authority in all matters of internal administration and external relations. The Maharani and the Sardars were, therefore, unwilling to continue the existing arrangement which was to lapse after the expiry of one year, according to the terms of the treaty. Lawrence reported on December 17, 1846, 'of Rani's endeavour to win over the Sardars to a scheme of independent government of which she herself was to be the head' Hardinge then proposed new arrangements for perpetuating the British control over the Panjāb, but directed his Secretary, Frederick Currie, to manage things in such a way that the proposal to retain British troops and other modifications of the treaty to ensure the unlimited control of the British in the administration of the Panjāb should originate from the *darbār*.[106] The right of the Maharani to be Regent was questioned and she was deliberately ignored, while the Sardars were coaxed with allurements or coerced by threats to consent to the new arrangements proposed by the Governor-General. There was a division among the Sardars, one group supporting, and the other opposing the British control. At last a compromise was reached and the Sardars agreed to ask the Governor-General to permit the Agent with two battalions to continue for some months. A written proposal to that effect was handed over to Currie on December 14, 1846. Hardinge, however, summarily re-

jected it. "It is my positive determination not to employ a British garrison in carrying on a native administration in the Panjab". Thus admonished, Currie held a conference of the Chiefs and Sardars on December 15, 1846, and read out to them a paper which contained the minimum conditions which the Governor-General proposed to impose upon the Lahore Government. With the British army at Lahore, and dissensions and treachery among themselves, the acceptance of the ultimatum by the Sardars was a foregone conclusion. Curiously enough, the Rani, the mother of the boy-King, was studiously ignored in making the future arrangements of her son's kingdom. A loyal Sikh Sardar, Diwan Dina Nath, proposed adjournment of the conference in order that they might take the opinion of the Maharani, but he was curtly told by Currie that "the Governor-General was not asking the opinion of the Queen-mother but of the Sardars and Pillars of the State".[107] This stern rebuke was enough to silence dissent and so the Treaty of Bhyrowal was signed on the following day, December 16, 1846.[108]

This treaty provided that "a British officer, with an efficient establishment of assistants, shall be appointed by the Governor-General to remain at Lahore, which officer shall have full authority *to direct and control all matters in every department of the State*."[109] During the minority of Maharaja Dalip Singh the administration was to be conducted by a Council of Regency consisting of eight persons named in the treaty. It was, however, provided that no change shall be made in the Council of Regency without the consent of the British Resident. The Queen-mother, Rani Jindan, was not a member of the Council of Regency, and was to receive an annual pension of one lakh and fifty thousand Rupees. Any fort or military post in the Lahore territory could be occupied by British soldiers. The Lahore State was to pay annually twenty-two lakhs of Rupees for the maintenance of this force and to meet the expenses incurred by the British Government.

Thus the effective power of administration, both civil and military, passed into the hands of the British Government, acting through its Resident at Lahore, whose power, as the Governor-General put it, was 'as unlimited in military affairs as in civil administration'.[110] Henry Lawrence was appointed the first Resident.

V. THE PANJAB UNDER BRITISH CONTROL

Thus at the beginning of 1847 the British took upon themselves the entire responsibility of governing the Panjab, and the Resident, Henry Lawrence, became the *de facto* ruler of the Province. Tej Singh became his chief adviser and the title of Raja was conferred

upon him in recognition of the signal services he had rendered to the British. But during the ceremony of his investiture, the boy-King refused to put the saffron mark or *tika* on the forehead of the traitor. When requested to do so by a Sardar, he folded his arms and shrank back into his chair. Lawrence took this as an affront to the British Government and, holding the Queen-mother responsible for her son's action, at once confined her in the Samman tower of the Lahore Fort. She wrote a strong letter of protest to Lawrence, complaining of the humiliation and ill treatment to which she had been constantly subjected. She asked, "Why do you take possession of the kingdom by underhand means? Why don't you do it openly"? and concluded by saying, "Preserve three or four traitors, and put the whole of the Panjāb to the sword at their bidding.[111]

Henry Lawrence knew only too well of the intelligence and intrepid spirit of the Queen-mother, her political acumen and general ability, and the great influence she exercised upon the Panjāb. So he wanted to get rid of her and accused her of cognizance of a conspiracy to murder Tej Singh As there was no evidence, the Governor-General did not take any action on that charge, but authorised the Resident to remove the Maharani on political grounds. So she was confined in the fort of Sheikhupura on August 20, 1847, under most humiliating conditions. She demanded an open inquiry into the allegations against her, and sent an agent to represent her case before the Governor-General. But all was in vain. For the real ground of her incarceration was, as the Resident put it, that "the Maharanee is the only effective enemy to our policy that I know of in the country".[112]

The unjustified incarceration of the queen of Ranjit Singh, a staunch and life-long ally of the British, was the last act of Hardinge in regard to the Panjāb. He was succeeded by Lord Dalhousie in January, 1848. As Henry Lawrence went home on sick-leave, Frederick Currie, Foreign Secretary to the Government of India from 1842 to 1847, was appointed British Resident at Lahore. He had long ago expressed his view against bolstering up the puppet Dalip Singh or "setting up a native Government" in the Panjāb instead of making it a part of British India.[113] He was thus a fit agent of the new Governor-General who was inspired by the noble ambition of making the whole map of India red, to use the alleged saying of dying Ranjit Singh. When there is a strong desire to do a thing, excuses and opportunities are easily found or created. So Currie made Diwan Mulraj of Multān the scapegoat of his favourite project.

On the death of Sawan Mall, the Governor of Multān, his son, Mulraj, was asked to pay a succession fee of thirty lakhs of Rupees. On the arrival of the British in the Panjāb in 1846, troops were sent to enforce the payment, but they were defeated. It was ultimately settled that the district of Jhang was to be taken away from him, and the annual revenue payable by him to be increased, from 19 to 25 lakhs at the first renewal and to Rs. 30 lakhs at the second. Diwan Mulraj thereupon tendered resignation, but changed his mind at the request of John Lawrence who was acting as Resident in place of his brother Henry. It was agreed between them that Mulraj would retain his office for another year, and in the meantime his resignation should be kept a profound secret from the Lahore *darbār*. But as soon as Currie took over charge as Resident, he decided to introduce the British system of administration in Multān under British officers. So the resignation of Mulraj was accepted, and a new Governor, Sardar Khan Singh Man, was sent to take his place, accompanied by two British officers, P. A. Vans Agnew and Lt. W. A. Anderson. As Curry wrote in his letter of April 6, 1848, Khan Singh was to be the nominal Governor and the administration would be really conducted by the British agent Mr Agnew.[114]

The new Governor, Khan Singh, and the British officers arrived at Multān on April 18, 1848. Next morning the fort was quietly handed over by Mulraj, and his men were replaced by Gurkha soldiers of the Lahore Regiment. When the new Governor and the British officers, together with Mulraj, were coming out of the fort on horseback, a small spear was thrust at Mr. Agnew near the bridge over the fort ditch. The cause of this outrage is difficult to determine. According to most of the witnesses, the assailant threw his spear under provocation, but the nature of the provocation is variously described. He was either knocked by the horse of Agnew, or struck by his whip, deliberately or accidentally, or pushed by his peon for not saluting him. Khan Singh, who was with Agnew, took him on an elephant to the camp at the Idgah; Lieut. Anderson galloped off, but was pursued by some horsemen and wounded severely. Mulraj, who was riding far ahead when Agnew was struck, wanted to go to the Idgah to see the wounded British officers, but was prevented by his own soldiers who had decided to revolt under his leadership. For this purpose they fastened on his wrist a *kangna*, or bracelet of war, and it is said that he was ultimately persuaded by his mother's taunts and curses to accept the leadership of the insurgents. All this took place on the 19th. Next day there was firing on Idgah from the fort, and the messengers, sent by Agnew to stop it, were repelled by the insurgents. The Lahore Regiment also fired, as a result of which the son of a Mazhabi Sikh was killed.

Towards the evening a deputation from Agnew arranged for the peaceful departure of the Lahore army. About this time a number of Lahore troops joined the rebels, and an angry crowd, in order to avenge the death of the Mazhabi boy, rushed the Idgah camp and murdered Agnew and Anderson. Thus began the rebellion in Multān under Mulraj, which was more due to a sudden provocation than any premeditated plan.[115]

The truth of the above account, which is generally accepted, cannot be vouched for in all its details. But whatever we might think of the rebellion of Multān and Mulraj's share in it, there was no doubt that it was a local affair, and not the result of a general plan. As the British Resident was responsible for the preservation of the peace of the country, it was the clear duty of Currie to take prompt steps to suppress it. But, strange to say, nothing was done, and first the Resident, and then the Governor-General and the Commander-in-Chief, offered the excuse of hot weather for not sending any British troops. Lieutenant Edwardes, Assistant Political Agent at Bannu, enrolled 3,000 Pathans, and, together with a Muslim battalion under Cortlandt, advanced and besieged Multān as soon as he heard the news; but he had to fall back on the approach of an army under the brother of Mulraj. He urged the Resident to take quick action, but it was not till the end of June when he was joined by the Lahore troops, about 4,000 strong, under the command of Shaikh Imamuddin, Jawahar Mall, and Raja Sher Singh. No British troops accompanied them until, at the earnest request of Edwardes, General Whish was sent, and he arrived at Multān on September 3, 1848.

By this time the revolt had spread to Bannu, Peshāwār, and also to the north-western part of the Panjāb. Several acts of the British in the Panjāb also inflamed the already excited people. The chief among these was the removal of the Maharani far away from the Panjāb On May 16, the Resident wrote: "There is no proof, though there is some ground for suspicion, that the Maharani was the instigator of the late violence in Multan."[116] This must be regarded as a very strange suspicion, indeed, if we remember that the Maharani was a closely guarded prisoner long before the resignation of Mulraj. Currie argues, in the same letter, that the removal of the Rani from the Panjāb "is called for by justice and policy, and there is no time for us to hesitate about doing what may appear necessary to punish state offenders whatever may be their rank and station and to vindicate the honour and position of the British Government." To speak of "justice" and "state offenders", when it is admitted that there is no proof of the offence, is nothing

short of ridiculous. The real cause of the exile of the Maharani is thus explained by Currie in the same letter: "It is certain that at this moment, the eyes of Diwan Mulraj, of the whole Sikh army and military population, are directed to the Maharani as the rallying point of their rebellion or disaffection". There might have been some truth in this assertion, for the local revolt at Multān was undoubtedly growing into a popular rebellion. But there is no doubt that some such apprehension, entertained by the highest British authority, was at the root of her incarceration. When Brigadier Mountain informed Dalhousie of the anxiety of the Sikhs for the release of the Rani, Dalhousie regarded it as preposterous and wrote to him: "The more sincere they (Sikhs) are (for the release of the Maharani) the stronger are the grounds for not acceding to them. She has the only manly understanding in the Punjab; and her restoration would furnish the only thing which is wanting to render the present movement truly formidable, namely an object and a head."[116a]

The exile of the Maharani had provoked popular discontent, and stories of her ill-treatment enhanced the passions of the Sikhs. Indeed, the Maharani was subjected to a most humiliating treatment during her exile. It created such a painful impression that even the Afghān ruler Dost Muhammad Khan protested against it.[117]

Next to the disgraceful treatment of Rani Jindan, the treatment of Sardar Chatar Singh may be regarded as the most important cause of the spread of revolt among the Sikhs.

Both Sardar Chatar Singh Atariwala and his son Raja Sher Singh were loyal and devoted servants of the newly constituted government at Lahore under the supervision of the British Resident. Sher Singh led the Sikh army, on behalf of the *darbār*, against Mulraj, when he revolted at Multān How and why he deserted the British cause and led the Sikh troops against them, may be briefly told.

Chatar Singh, a very popular and respected Sikh leader, was the Governor of Hazāra. His daughter was engaged to Maharaja Dalip Singh. The British did not like this idea, for they feared that a matrimonial alliance with the King would make Chatar Singh too powerful. The Resident, therefore, put off, on one pretext or another, the date of celebrating the marriage Both Chatar Singh and his son Sher Singh made repeated requests, but to no effect. Lieut. Edwardes, a friend of Sher Singh, conveyed the wishes of the father and son to the Resident He referred to the widespread, though unjustified, feeling among the people of the Punjāb that the

British meditated annexation of the country, and suggested that the British should assure the people of their "good faith and intention to adhere to the treaty" by celebrating the royal marriage. Lord Dalhousie rebuked Edwardes for the impertinence shown by an assistant to the Resident in transmitting "to his Government a *volunteer* opinion that they would be guilty of breach of faith if they adopt a particular policy, which the Government of India, Her Majesty's Ministers and the Secret Committee all contemplate as probable."[118] The Resident also gave a stiff and evasive reply to Edwardes.

The British attitude disheartened the two loyal servants Chatar Singh and Sher Singh. What was worse, it confirmed the worst suspicions of the people to which Edwardes referred, and Sikh soldiers under Sher Singh began to desert in large numbers and join Mulraj.

In the meanwhile the position of Chatar Singh as the Governor of Hazāra became almost unbearable. Captain James Abbott, his adviser on behalf of the Resident, behaved with him in a manner as if he was the superior authority. Abbott brought a charge against Chatar Singh that he was the head of a conspiracy for the expulsion of the English from the Panjāb. Even the Resident thought it incredible and remarked in his letter to the Governor-General that "the constant suspicion with which Captain Abbott regarded Sirdar Chuttar Singh, seems to have, not unnaturally, estranged that chief from him."[119] Abbott also devised means to put Chatar Singh in difficulty and danger. He instigated the Muslims of Hazāra against the Governor Chatar Singh and himself wrote to the Resident on August 19:

"I, on my part, assembled the chiefs of Hazāra; explained what had happened, and called upon them, by the memory of their murdered parents, friends and relatives, to rise, and aid me to destroying the Sikh forces in detail. I issued purwannas to this effect throughout the land and marched to a strong position."[120]

According to a Muslim correspondent of Sir Charles Napier, "Captain Abbott wrote to the Hazarees, that if they will drive Chuttur Singh out, three years' revenue should be remitted."[121]

On August 6, 1848, a large body of Muslims of Hazāra surrounded the town of Haripur where Chatar Singh lived. Chatar Singh, as Governor, issued instructions to the troops to bring their guns and encamp under the fort-walls, but Commandant Canora, the artillery officer, "refused to obey the Governor's orders unless backed by Captain Abbott." The Governor repeated the orders, but far from complying with them, Canora placed himself between his two

loaded guns and threatened to fire on any one that approached him. Chatar Singh asked the Colonel of the infantry to enforce his orders. Canora then ordered one of his havildārs to fire upon the infantry, and on his refusal to do so, cut him down on the spot. He then applied the match himself, but the gun missed fire. Canora then whipped out his pistol, and shot down two Sikh officers. Canora was then shot with musketry.[122]

Captain Abbott represented Chatar Singh's action as a premeditated, cold-blooded murder, forming a part of his conspiracy. The Resident took up the proper view when he pointed out in his reply to Abbott, dated August 19, 1848, that "Sirdar Chuttur Singh was the Governor of the province, military and civil, and the officers of the Sikh army were bound to obey him, the responsibility for his orders resting with him. Taking the worst view of the case, I know not how you can characterize it as a cold-blooded murder".[123] He also rebuked Abbott for misrepresenting the general state of affairs and throwing doubts on the fidelity of Chatar Singh, and making unauthorised military preparations to suppress his conspiracy which did not exist in fact. But, curiously enough, although Abbott was rebuked for his attitude and conduct, he was not removed from his post, and he continued his nefarious activities against the Governor, Chatar Singh, with impunity. The Hazāra affair had convinced Chatar Singh that Abbott might go to any extent to ruin him, and as Abbott was allowed to continue in his post, Chatar Singh decided to resign. Before doing so, he made a last effort to get the permission of the Resident to celebrate his daughter's marriage with Dalip Singh. The Resident, Sir Frederick Currie, evaded the question, and his attitude towards Chatar Singh gradually (or suddenly) changed. He now approved of the measures of Abbott and accepted Captain Nicholson's suggestion of punishing Chatar Singh "with forfeiture of his government and *jagīrs*." "Surrounded by blood-thirsty Hazāras and persecuted by Abbott himself, and having no hope of justice and succour from the Resident, who would not give him the permission even to resign his post and proceed on pilgrimage, Sardar Chatar Singh wrote to his son Raja Sher Singh, about the 23rd of August, 'complaining bitterly of Abbott, whose suspicions and treachery (*Munsoobah*) had driven him to adopt military measures to guard his life and honour.' This was followed by further similar communications calling upon the Raja to join him in defending the honour of his family and the independence of his country. At last, on September 13, 1848, Raja Sher Singh decided to throw in his lot with his injured father and went over to Mulraj on the following day, September 14."[124]

The imprisonment and humiliating treatment of Rani Jindan and the defection of Chatar Singh and Sher Singh stirred up the flame of rebellion all over the Panjāb. There was also a resurgence of the national spirit of the Sikhs, who had been defeated by treachery and felt themselves unjustly deprived of their freedom by the British. But all these causes could operate only because the local rebellion was not promptly put down and allowed to spread its baneful influence. The inevitable consequence of this conduct of the British was so obvious, that even many English writers have openly accused the British of deliberately postponing action in order that the local revolt might assume serious proportions and develop into a general rebellion which will justify the annexation of the Panjāb by way of proper punishment.

Lieut.-General J. J. McLeod Innes tells us in his *Sir Henry Lawrence*:[125]

"Such steps were thus deliberately avoided as might have crushed the outbreak at its start, as Henry Lawrence had done with the Kāshmir attempt. Obviously the outbreak was assumed to be a premeditated Sikh movement, putting aside all idea of the continuance of a friendly Panjāb. And the Government practically elected to run the risk—many held it to be the certainty—of the flame of insurrection spreading over the Province; of rousing afresh that spirit in the Khalsa...

"Many held it to be so obvious that there could be no other result, that they refused to believe that the coming struggle was not deliberately desired and determined by the Commander-in-Chief and the Government." It is difficult to reject this view as absolutely unwarranted.

As a matter of fact, it was a widely prevalent belief in the Panjāb that the British looked upon the rebellion of Mulraj as a good opportunity to annex the Panjāb, and was merely biding time for the maturity of the plans. This belief led first Chatar Singh and then his son Sher Singh to leave the side of the British and raise the standard of revolt.

There is abundant evidence to show that even after the rebellion of Mulraj there was no conspiracy against the British, and the Lahore *darbār* remained faithful to the constitution. Even so late as August 15, 1848, the Resident wrote to the Commander-in-Chief· "There is no sign, hitherto, anywhere, of the conspiracy or combination among the chiefs, or any parties, at Lahore, as believed by Captain Abbott, or of any complicity on the part of any one connected with the Durbar in the present outbreak."[126] This was written less than a month before Sher Singh was forced to

join the rebellion. There is, therefore, no question of an unprovoked challenge to the British by the Sikhs, and the following oft-quoted passage in the speech of Lord Dalhousie can only be regarded as an example of the megalomania of which the noble lord was a frequent victim: "Unwarned by precedent, uninfluenced by example, the Sikh nation has called for war, and on my word, Sirs, they shall have it with a vengeance". This speech was delivered on October 10, 1848, nearly six months after the outbreak at Multān, yet the Sikh Government at Lahore was still functioning as the constitutional authority representing the Sikh nation; and one can well sympathise with the bewilderment of Lord Gough, the British Commander-in-Chief, who did not know whether he was called upon to fight against, or on behalf of, the Sikh *darbār* at Lahore. "I do not know", he wrote on November 15, "whether we are at peace or war, or who it is we are fighting for". It was not till after he had reached Lahore that he "knew the definite decision of the Governor-General that the war was to be against, and not in support of, the Durbār".[127] It is obvious that except Lord Dalhousie and perhaps a few of his trusted advisers, even the highest official circle took the view that the British army was called upon to suppress a revolt in the Panjāb against the Sikh Government, set up by the British, and it was not going to fight "the Sikh nation calling for war." Few would deny that this was the correct view. Lord Dalhousie later treated Maharaja Dalip Singh and his government as belonging to the hostile party, though they certainly did not, and possibly could not, do anything inimical to the British, as they were under the complete control of the British Resident, backed by a powerful army. This was obviously a deliberate step taken to justify the annexation of the Panjāb.

VI. THE SECOND SIKH WAR

Immediately after leaving the British camp, Sher Singh issued an appeal to the Sikhs, inviting them to join the standard of revolt raised by Mulraj in order to expel the tyrannous and crafty *feringhees* (British) who had shown such cruelty to Maharani Jindan and the race of the Sikhs. He intended to join Mulraj and other rebel Sikh Chiefs in order to make a common cause against the British. But his sincere devotion and loyalty to the British made him a suspect in their eyes, and the suspicion was strengthened by a letter which was addressed to him by Herbert Edwardes, the British military officer mentioned above, but was really intended to fall into the hands of Mulraj through a spy.

Nevertheless, during his journey northwards from Multān, he was joined by large numbers of old Sikh soldiers, and he took his

position on the right bank of the Chenab, expecting to be joined there by his father and the troops from Bannu.

In the meantime his father Chatar Singh had left Hazāra, and having seized Peshāwār on October 31, captured Attock on January 3, 1849. But before he could join his son, the latter was already in the thick of the fight and fought the famous battle of Chiliānwālā. Dost Muhammad, the ruler of Afghānistān, also joined the Sikhs against the British on condition of receiving Peshāwār.

Lord Dalhousie treated the defection of Sher Singh and Chatar Singh as the *casus belli*, but did not make any open declaration of war. In his official letter, dated October 3, 1848, it was said that "the Governor-General in Council considers the State of Lahore to be, to all intents and purposes, directly at war with the British Government." The British Resident at Lahore, Frederic Currie, pointed out, on October 12, that "if that be the case, I with my assistants, am in an anomalous position, as superintending and aiding the administration of the Lahore State." He did not choose the only alternative course open to him as an honourable man, for the reason, as he said, that "if I were to withdraw from the Government and to declare the Treaty violated and all amicable relations between the two States at end, we should have the whole country up at once as one man to destroy us, if possible." Lord Dalhousie therefore accepted the suggestion of Currie that instead of a declaration of war against the Lahore State, there should be a declaration "setting forth that the British Government will now occupy the Panjāb Province..... ..that all consideration will be paid to the interests of the Maharaja Duleep Singh who, from his tender years, cannot be held personally responsible for the misconduct of the Lahore State." It was further agreed, at the same time, "to quietly annex the Panjāb", but to give no inkling of it till the Sikh army was defeated and crushed. Thus the pretence of Dalip Singh's Government would be maintained to lull the suspicion and disarm the opposition of the Sikhs, although it was already decided to annex the Panjāb after the war was over. This disingenuous policy is fully in keeping with the apprehensions expressed by Dalhousie on June 27, lest the rebellion in Multān be suppressed by the troops of the Lahore *darbār*, for in that case the policy of the annexation of the Panjāb will be more dubious in character, whereas if the British army were required to suppress the rebellion, "our right to do what we please with the Panjāb will be beyond cavil or dispute.[128]

The opportunity that Dalhousie had been looking for had at last presented itself, and he made elaborate preparations for the campaign. The grand army for the conquest of the Panjāb, with

Lord Gough as Commander-in-Chief, assembled at Firozpur, crossed the Sutlej on November 9, 1848, arrived at Lahore on the 13th, and reached the banks of the Chenab on November 16. The main army of Sher Singh was on the right bank of that river, but a few small scattered groups were on the left bank, at Nawala near Ramnagar. Lord Gough sent troops to drive these Sikhs, but the British suffered defeat with a heavy loss of life (November 22). A division of the British army then crossed the Chenab and a minor indecisive action was fought at Sadullāpur on December 3. The Sikh army retired in good order and took up a strong position at Chiliānwālā on the Jhelum. After this, "enjoined by the exasperated Governor-General", Gough remained inactive for six weeks.

Lord Gough proposed to wait till the fall of Multān which would release a large body of troops engaged there. But the advance of Chatar Singh as far as Attock changed the plan. The news of the fall of Attock reached the British camp on January 10, 1849, and it was decided to attack Sher Singh before he was reinforced by his father. On January 13, Gough attacked the Sikhs at 2 P.M. and a pitched battle was fought near the village of Chiliānwālā.

The battle of Chiliānwālā was one of the most hard-fought battles in the Sikh Wars. 'After a little over an hour's shelling, the effective half of which was the Sikh's, Lord Gough flung two infantry brigades' at the enemy at 3 P.M. The Sikh Commander "turned a shower of grape on them, beginning a discomfiture which masked musketry fire completed: the 4th Foot lost 482 men and their colours." The British cavalry "were routed by the Sikh cavalry, and made their celebrated backward charge over their own infantry and through their own artillery and wagon lines. The Sikhs accompanied them and took four guns. When night fell the British had lost 2,446 men and the colours of three regiments. Sikh soldiers traversed the tangled battlefield, butchering the wounded".[129] Lord Gough regarded it as a victory because the Sikhs retreated and the British army gained ground and spiked 30 or 40 Sikh guns. But even his colleagues regarded it as a discomfiture and pointed out that the British could not occupy the ground they had gained, the Sikhs retook the guns they had lost, and took up a position stronger than before.[130]

The result of the battle of Chiliānwālā has been estimated in various ways. Some regard it as a victory of the British; others, including many Englishmen, look upon it as a defeat; while many describe it as a drawn battle. There is, however, no doubt about its immediate effect upon Englishmen.

Lord Gough proposed to fall back six miles, but was dissuaded from this course, as it was sure to be interpreted as admission of defeat. Dalhousie could hardly conceal his despair, disgust, and vexation at the conduct of the Commander-in-Chief, and in a state of exasperation wrote to him in terms which, he was aware, "will be very distasteful to him".

When the news reached England there was dismay and consternation on all sides, and the 'nation was stricken with profound emotion.' Sir John Hobhouse, President of the Board of Control, observed on March 7, 1849, that "the impression upon the public mind was stronger than that caused by the Kābul Massacre." "The result has been", he continued, "that in eight-and-forty hours after the arrival of the mail, it was determined to send Sir Charles Napier to command the Indian army".[131]

In the meanwhile events had taken a more favourable turn at Multān. General Whish had been sent to Multān at the beginning of September, 1848, but he raised the siege on September 16, at the defection of Sher Singh. It was not resumed till a column arrived from Bombay; the city was carried by assault on January 2, 1849, and Mulraj unconditionally surrendered on January 22.

On January 16, Sardar Chatar Singh joined Sher Singh at Chiliānwālā. They tried to provoke the British Commander-in-Chief to offer fight, but the latter held out until he was joined by the British troops released from Multān. The Sikh army marched to Gujarāt, on the right bank of the Chenab, where a pitched battle was fought on February 21, 1849. The Sikh army was defeated and completely routed, and the British cavalry pursued them for fifteen miles. On March 12, 1849, there was a general surrender of the Sikhs when Sardars and soldiers laid down their arms. The Sikh army ceased to exist. An old Sikh soldier saluted the pile of arms with joined palms and exclaimed: "To-day Ranjit Singh is dead".

VII. THE ANNEXATION OF THE PANJĀB

Lord Dalhousie had made up his mind from the very beginning to annex the Panjāb. As Sir Henry Lawrence, who had resumed his duty as Resident, was strongly opposed to this course, Dalhousie sent his Foreign Secretary, H. M. Elliot, to complete the transaction. He put the whole thing very bluntly to the members of the Council of Regency. He said in effect that the British were determined to annex the Panjāb; if the Sardars with the Maharaja at their head willingly gave assent to this proposal, they would be favourably treated; otherwise they would lose everything.[132] No wonder, that after this they agreed to the treaty which was signed at Lahore on

March 29, 1849, and ratified by the Governor-General on April 5. By this treaty Dalip Singh resigned the sovereignty of the Panjāb and the British agreed to give him a pension between four and five lakhs of Rupees a year.[133]

Thus was enacted the final scene in the tragic drama of the Panjāb. It was the culmination of a series of base intrigues and violation of solemn engagements on the part of the British Government of India. Yet Lord Dalhousie had the hardihood to issue a Proclamation,[134] justifying his action, which was read aloud immediately after the treaty was signed on March 29. It is a document which hardly deserves serious consideration, except as an illustration of unscrupulous concealment of truth, almost to an unparalleled degree. It begins by saying that "the British have faithfully kept their word and have scrupulously observed every obligation which the treaties imposed upon them". It has been shown above, how they honoured article 15 of the Treaty of March 9, 1846, to the effect that "the British Government will not exercise any interference in the internal administration of the Lahore State". It has also been shown how, by force and fraud, the British not only manipulated to evade Article 1 of the Treaty of March 11, 1846, by which they undertook to withdraw their force from Lahore before the end of the year 1846, but imposed most rigorous and humiliating conditions on the Lahore *darbār.*

How the British faithfully kept their word may be illustrated by the final act of treachery against Maharaja Dalip Singh, a minor under their protection. As noted above, Dalhousie and Currie, while resolved to annex the Panjāb, deliberately kept up the pretence that the British army fought in the Panjāb to preserve the constituted Government. Even so late as November 18, 1848, *after* the British Commander-in-Chief had marched from Lahore against the army of Sher Singh, Currie proclamied to the people of the Panjāb, that the British army "has entered the Lahore territories, not as an enemy to the constituted Government, but to restore order and obedience."[135] Yet, as soon as the "rebellious" Sikh army was crushed at Gujarāt, the constituted Government was thrown away, as a man kicks off the ladder after he has reached the desired height.

This simile is fully applicable to the British policy. They deliberately used the name of Maharaja Dalip Singh to prevent a considerable portion of the army and people of the Panjāb from joining the rebellion, and as soon as they achieved this purpose they overthrew both the Maharaja and his government.

This also gives lie direct to the statement in the Proclamation that the "army of the State, and the whole Sikh people, joined by

many of the Sirdars in the Panjāb, who signed the treaties, and led by a member of the Regency itself, have risen in arms against us". The fact is that for many months the rebellion was confined to Mulraj, and the troops sent against him were commanded by the Sikh officers who remained faithful to the *darbār*. Even Sher Singh, the hero of Chiliānwālā, who was sent at the head of an army against Mulraj, remained faithful to the British and Lahore *darbār*, —so much so that when he actually rebelled against them, Mulraj and other Sikh leaders could not trust his sincerity and refused to co-operate with him. But even at the final stage, "there was no rising either of the army or of the people in the central Sikh districts of the state; not a single British Officer was attacked or molested. The British Resident continued to stay at the capital of the kingdom, issuing orders to the Council of Regency, the *darbār*, and receiving their fullest co-operation." The Lahore *darbār* sent two of its chief officers to accompany and guide the British Commander-in-Chief in his expedition from Lahore against Sher Singh.[136]

As regards defection, "only one member of the Regency, out of eight", had joined the rebels, and another was only *suspected* The remaining six were perfectly faithful and obedient. In addition to the great majority of the army who took no part in the revolt, "at least 20,000 subjects of the Lahore State" enrolled in its service, fought on the side of the Government, and assisted in suppressing the rebellion.[137]

It is unnecessary to say anything further by way of exposing the true character of Lord Dalhousie's Proclamation which was intended to bolster up a gross act of injustice. Both contemporaries, including many Englishmen, and later writers, have pointed out that whatever might have been the guilt of the Sikhs, individually or collectively, there was absolutely no justification for setting aside Dalip Singh and his government. "The British Government". says John Sullivan, "was the self-constituted guardian of the Rajah, and the regent of his kingdom; a rebellion was provoked by the agents of the guardian, it was acknowledged by the guardian to be a rebellion against the government of his ward, and the guardian punished that ward by confiscating his dominions and his diamonds to his own use".[138] Ludlow truly observed: "We protected our ward by taking his whole territory from him.. . But having once recognised and undertaken to protect Dhuleep Singh, it was a mockery to punish him for the faults of his subjects,"[139] over whom, one might add, not he, but the British Resident, had the fullest authority.

Indeed no plea for the annexation of the Panjāb would bear a moment's scrutiny. Yet the sole responsibility for this despotic and

immoral deed belongs to Dalhousie. He annexed the Panjāb without the formal sanction of the home authorities, whose hand was "thus forced by the action of their Indian pro-consul."[140]

After the annexation, the administration of the Panjāb was entrusted to a Board of three, Sir Henry Lawrence being the Chief. The other two were his brother, John Lawrence, and Robert Montgomery. There was no love lost between the two brothers, for while Henry tried to conciliate the old *jāgīrdārs* and ruling class, he was opposed by John, and was 'sorely' and 'daily' vexed by his conduct. John evidently followed the principles of governing the Panjāb which Robert Napier suggested long ago, in a letter to Currie, dated October 3, 1848. "I think", wrote he, "we ought, if we take the Panjāb, to reduce entirely the aristocracy. The people without heads are nothing."[141] Dalhousie evidently was of the same opinion, and thought John to be "a better man, fitted in every way for that place". So, when both the brothers offered their resignations in December, 1852, Dalhousie had no difficulty in making up his mind which brother to keep. John was, of course, retained. Henry, before he left, wrote a farewell letter to his brother which contains the following: "It seems to me that you look on almost all questions affecting Jagheerdars and Maffeerdars in a perfectly different light from all others; in fact that you consider them as nuisances and as enemies". John Lawrence has obtained immortal fame for his efficient administration of the Panjāb, particularly during the Mutiny. But the people of the Panjāb mourned the departure of Henry Lawrence. John ruled the Panjāb with an iron hand, at the best as a benevolent despot, and openly offered the challenge to her people: "Will you be governed by the pen or by the sword? Choose". This line, which characterised the British rule in the Panjāb after its annexation, was inscribed on the statue of John Lawrence, and was a rude reminder, for three quarters of a century, of the transfer of the last independent kingdom in India to the British dominions.[142]

VIII. LAST DAYS OF RANI JINDAN AND MAHARAJA DALIP SINGH

Reference may be made in conclusion to the fate of Maharani Jindan and her minor son, Dalip Singh. As mentioned above, Maharani Jindan, although a closely guarded prisoner, was suspected of instigating the rebellion in Multān, and was exiled from the Panjāb. She was kept a prisoner at Banāras but was suspected of making a plot to escape. She was accordingly transferred to the Chunār Fort on 6 April, 1849. On the same evening she got away from the fort in the guise of one of her attendants, and proceeded towards Nepāl. Her flight was not known till the 19th, and so the

Maharani safely crossed the borders and reached Nepāl territory on 27 April. She prayed to the King of Nepāl to give her shelter, but the latter hesitated to incur the wrath of the British by granting her an asylum. He was, however, saved from the dilemma by the British. The Government of India seized all the property of the Maharani at Banāras and allowed her to stay in Nepāl on a monthly pension of one thousand Rupees.[143]

The ex-Maharaja Dalip Singh was removed from the Panjāb to Fatehgarh in U.P. He was brought up under Christian influence and embraced that religion on 8 March, 1853, i.e. before he had even completed the age of sixteen years.

On 19 April, 1854, he left for England and stayed there till 1860, when he returned to India and was permitted to see his mother. The Maharani's health was shattered and she became almost blind. Dalip Singh wanted to stay with his mother, but the Government of India would allow neither of them to reside in India. So Dalip returned to England with his mother where she died on August 1, 1863. According to her last wishes Dalip brought her body to India, but was not allowed to proceed to the Panjāb. He therefore cremated her body at Nāsik and returned to England.

Evidently Dalip had learnt from his mother the full story of the annexation of the Panjāb and the treatment meted to them, and so became sadly disillusioned. The Government of England sensed this and had prevailed upon Dalip to arrange a separate house for Maharani Jindan. After her death Dalip made a formal representation for the restoration of his private estates and property which were unlawfully seized by the Government of India and amalgamated with the territories of the State. Prolonged negotiations followed, but Dalip Singh did not succeed in recovering anything. At last in 1885 he decided to sell his estates in Suffolk and take up his residence in Delhi. But the Government of India refused him permission to settle in Delhi, and required him to reside at Ootacamund. Much against his will he consented to do so, and left for India in 1886. He was, however, arrested and detained at Aden and was ordered to go back.

A great change had already come over Dalip Singh, and before he left England he addressed a letter to his "beloved countrymen", in which he ventilated his grievances against the British.[144] It was regarded as seditious by the Government and probably accounts for his arrest at Aden. During his stay at Aden he renounced Christianity and re-embraced the Sikh faith. He also repudiated the treaty of annexation which he was made to sign at the age of eleven years. In 1888 he visited Russia, and on 25 July, 1889, issued an appeal to

the people of India to offer up prayers for the success of his endeavour to free India with the material support he was shortly expecting from Russia. It is alleged that he intrigued with the Native States of India for the same purpose. But all these came to nothing, and Dalip asked Queen Victoria to pardon him. The pardon was granted and Dalip Singh remained quiet until his death which took place at Paris on 23 October, 1893.[146]

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1. The facts, stated in this section are, unless otherwise stated, based on *Ranjit Singh* by N. K. Sinha (Third Edition, Calcutta, 1951).
1a. Aitchison, I. 33.
1b. Ibid, 34.
2. Cf. Chapter VII.
3. Sinha, 62.
3a Singh, 18.
3b. Aitchison, I. 35.
4. Quoted by Singh, 24. Cf also Dr McGregor, *History of the Sikhs*, I. 263.
5. Sinha, 193.
6 Ibid, 198
7. Ibid, 197.
8. Ibid, 196
9. Ibid, 198.
10 Ibid, 197.
11 Ibid, 199.
12. Ibid, 93.
13 Ibid, 94.
13a Ibid, 97.
13b Aitchison, I. 41.
13c. Ranjit even refused to join hands with the Russians against the British The Russian envoy Vitkevitch, while intriguing with Kābul (see p 167), wrote to Ranjit Singh asking permission to visit him Auckland had no difficulty in persuading Ranjit Singh to decline the proposal (*CHBFP*, II. 206, Kaye-II, I. 208-10).
13d Sinha, 192.
14 Ibid, 188.
15. Gupta, p. xxix-xxx.
16. Sinha, 160-61.
17. Gupta, p. lxxxviii.
17a Sinha, 191.
18. Cunningham, 253.
19. Ibid.
20 Sinha, 185.
20a Singh, 30.
21. Cunningham, 324-5. Some, however, regard it as a pure accident (*CR*, May, 1944, p. 74).
22. Cunningham, 325.
23. Ranjit Singh himself gave credence to the report that Sher Singh was the son of a carpenter, but in 1820 virtually adopted him. (For fuller details, cf. *CR*, May, 1944, p. 74).
24 "The most curious part of the affair is that Gulab Singh and Hira Singh espoused the cause of Chand Kaur in apparent opposition to Dhian Singh. Carmichael Smyth says· "It is a well-known fact that in all important intrigues, it was the policy of the two brothers, by appearing to divide, to side with and lead the two opposing parties." Lawrence says: "Whatever were the motives of the wily brothers, they evidently worked in concert, and never better understood each other, than when nominally heading the partizans of rival claimants to the throne" (Ibid, 75).
25. Gupta, pp viii-ix.
26 Ibid, ix. For a full and critical account of Mai Chand Kaur cf *PIHRC*, XXXI, 65.
27. Cunningham, 330-31.
28. Gupta, p. x.
29. Ibid.
29a. *CR*, May, 1944, pp. 77-8.
29b Gupta, p. xi.
30. Cunningham, 336.

31. *CR*, 1944, pp. 84-5.
32. Gupta, xii.
33. Cunningham, 336 fn.
34. Gupta, pp. xii-xiii.
35. Henry Lawrence wrote in the *Calcutta Review* in November, 1844: "He (Hira Singh) touched the soldiery on a sensitive point; he offered the payment of all arrears; a douceur of a month's pay; and an increase to all branches of the army....at a word offering fifty per cent. increased allowances to all who would follow him and avenge the murder of their sovereign and his minister." On this Dr. I. B. Banerjee comments. "But that was not the only sensitive point where the soldiery could be touched and it is not difficult to surmise that the intrigues of the Sindhanwalias with the British and the pronounced anti-British views of Dhyan Singh must have come very handy to Hira Singh" (*CR*, May, 1944). There can be hardly any doubt that the pecuniary gain must have been the stronger incentive to the Sikh soldiery, even if the other motive were present, of which, however, we have no positive evidence
36. Gupta, p xiii
37. Gupta, pp. xxix-xxx, and the news-letters referred to therein
38 There are different views about the date of Dalip Singh's birth. Dr. H. R. Gupta, after discussing these, concludes that "September 1837 seems to be the correct date of Dalip Singh's birth" (Gupta, p. xxix, fn. 3). According to Ganda Singh, Dalip Singh was born on October 6-7, 1838 (Singh, 43). The Article 11 of the treaty between the British Government and the Lahore *darbar*, dated 16th December, 1846, clearly lays down that the Maharaja Dalip Singh will attain the full age of sixteen years on 4 September, 1854. This seems to be decisive in favour of fixing the date of Dalip Singh's birth on September 4, 1838.
39. *CR*. 1944, p 80.
40. Ibid. Gupta, pp lx ff.
41. *CR*. 1944, p 82 It has been doubted whether the quarrel "was genuine or was merely a sham engineered by the Dogra family to dupe the world" (Gupta, pp. lxxxiii-iv).
41a. Gupta, pp. li-lxix.
42 *CR*. 1944, p. 81.
43. Singh, 43-4. It is further said that Gulab Singh "had already helped himself to all the money and valuables belonging to Maharani Chand Kaur, and the accumulated treasure of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, in January 1841, when Sher Singh had come to the throne." (Singh, 44).
44 *CR*. 1944, p. 82.
45. Ibid.
46. Ibid, 83.
47. Gupta, pp. lxxxiv-lxxxv.
48. Ibid, xciv.
49. Ibid, xiv.
50. Ibid, xciv-xcviii.
51. Cunningham, 332.
52. Ibid, 333-4. The statements are all supported by documentary evidence referred to in footnotes.
53 Ibid, 334-5.
54. Singh, 31.
55. Ibid, 32.
56. Ibid.
57. Ibid, 35.
57a Ibid, 38.
58 Ibid, 33.
59 Ibid, 39.
60. Ibid, 40.
61. Ibid, 41.
62 Ibid. The news of the murders must have been on its way when this letter was written.
63 Ibid
64. All the three letters are quoted in Singh, 41-3.
65. Singh, 45.
66. Singh, 45-6.

67. Singh, 51.
68. Singh, 52-3.
69. "The Sikh army consistently demanded punishment of Missar Lal Singh for keeping illicit connection with Rani Jindan, but he was created a Raja instead" (Gupta, p. xl).
70. Singh, 57-8.
71. Cunningham, 390, 394.
72. Singh, 66-7.
73. Cunningham, 390
74. Campbell, *Memoirs*, 76-7.
75. Singh, 77.
76. For details of these and other causes of estrangement, cf. Gupta, pp. lxx ff.
77. Ibid, lxxii.
78. Singh, 66.
79. Cunningham, 394.
80. Cunningham, 393.
81. Ibid, 388-9.
82. Singh, 60 The reference in the last sentence, is, of course, to the Sikh help in the last phase of the Afghān War.
83. Ibid.
84. Ibid, 68.
85. Cunningham, 396-7
86. "When the men were tauntingly asked whether they would quietly look on while the limits of the Khalsa dominion were being reduced, and the plains of Lahore occupied by the remote strangers of Europe, they answered that they would defend with their lives all belonging to the Commonwealth of Govind, and that they would march and give battle to the invaders on their own ground" Cunningham, 397. In the footnote Cunningham remarks that the ordinary private correspondence of the period contained many statements of this kind.
87. Singh, 70, quoting *BRC*, 872.
88. Singh, 70.
89. Singh, 69.
90. Ibid, 71.
91. Ibid
92. For a summary of the Proclamation and comments on the same, cf. Singh 73 ff. The text is given in Aitchison, XII. 48.
93. Ibid, 77.
94. P 78 Quoted in Singh, 78.

94a. *CHBFP*, II. 212.

95. Singh, 78; Ludlow, *British India*, II. 142. Lord Hardinge, writing to Currie on 10 December, 1846, after Lal Singh was banished from the Panjāb as will be related later, refers to "the paper which Lal Singh has received from Lawrence recognizing his services during the last campaign". (*Private Correspondence*, p. 12).
96. Quoted in Singh, 79, from the English translation of *Rapport sur le Derniers Evenements du Panjab*, Paris, 1846.
97. For the accounts of the campaigns that follow, cf. Singh, pp. 79 ff.
98. *Private Correspondence*, 6-8.
99. Dr. Andrew Adams, *Wanderings of a Naturalist in India*, pp. 60-61, quoted in Singh, 85.
100. Singh, 85-6.
101. Singh, 89-90. For the text of the treaty, cf. Aitchison, XII. 50.
102. Aitchison. XII. 54.
103. Cunningham, 438-9.
104. Singh, 91.
105. For a detailed account cf. "The Kashmir Rebellion and the Trial of Raja Lal Singh", by Dr. I. Banerji in *PIHC*, III, 1308 ff.
106. Hardinge wrote to Currie on 12 December, 1846: "Persevere in your line of making the Sikh Durbar propose the condition or rather their readiness to assent to any conditions imposed as the price of the continuance of our support." (*Private Correspondence*, 15).
107. Hardinge had written to Currie on December 7, 1846, that "in any agreement made for continuing the occupation of Lahore, her deprivation of power is an indispensable condition" (Singh, 95).

108. For the whole transaction, cf Singh, pp. 94 ff; also *PIHRC*, XVII. 91. This treaty, like that of March 11, was called Articles of Agreement. For the text, cf. Aitchison, XII. 56; also *Private Correspondence*, p. 482. Appendix B of this book (pp. 470 ff) gives the text of all treaties, proclamations etc.
109. Italics mine.
110. Singh, 99.
111. Singh, 101.
112. Singh, 104.
113. Currie's letter to Broadfoot, dated January 19, 1845; quoted in Singh, 106.
114. Singh, 107-9.
115. Singh, 109-11.
116. Singh, 105
116a. *PIHRC*, XXV, Part II, 90.
117. Singh, 117.
118. Singh, 120.
119. Ibid, 123.
120. Panjab Papers, 311, quoted in Singh, 123.
121. *Charles Napier*, IV, 129, quoted in Singh, 123.
122. This account is based on the Resident's report to the Governor-General dated August 12, 1848, quoted in Singh, 124.
123. Panjab Papers, 313, quoted in Singh, 124-5
124. Singh, 127.
125. P. 98, quoted in Singh, 113. The Government plea that it was difficult to begin the campaign in summer has been strongly criticised by many writers, who regarded it as a serious argument rather than a pretence (Cf. Singh, p. 113).
126 Panjab Papers, 286-7, quoted by Singh, 125.
127. Lord Gough also wrote to Currie on October 31, 1848: "Up to this time he (the Governor-General) has never distinctly stated to me that we are at war with the Panjab" Singh, 132
128. Singh, pp 129-30, 136.
129. *THG*, (341-2) For a detailed account of the war see the books mentioned in the Bibliography.
130. "Only the Commander-in-Chief was delighted with his feat He was astounded when George Lawrence seemed dissatisfied" The Duke of Wellington also condemned Lord Gough's tactics Cf *THG* (342).
131. *THG* (342-3), Singh, 133.
132 Singh, 139. For correspondence between Henry Lawrence and Dalhousie, cf. *THG* (344-45)
133. For the text of the "Terms granted to, and accepted by, Maharaja Dalip Singh", as the treaty was officially designated, cf Aitchison, XII 59.
134. For the text of the Proclamation, cf Singh, 140-1; Arnold, 202-4
135. Singh, 140.
136 Singh, 147.
137 Ibid
138. Sullivan, *Are We Bound by our Treaties*, p 52, quoted in Singh, 148 Under Article 3 of the Treaty of 1849, Dalip Singh had to surrender "the gem called the Koh-i-noor, which was taken from Shuja-ul-Mulk by Maharaja Ranjit Singh" (See p. 242).
139. Singh, 149.
140. *CHBFP*, II. 214.
141 Singh, 151.
142. For the administration of the Panjāb under the Board of three, and ill feeling between the two brothers, John and Henry, cf. *THG* (345-49).
143. The account is based on Trotter, I. 222. It is worthy of note that an eminent British historian like Trotter, while describing the flight of the Maharani, refers to her as the "beautiful vixen". Sardar Ganda Singh puts the date of her removal from the fort of Sheikhupura to the fort of Chunar in May, 1848.
144. The above account of Dalip Singh is based on "Some Correspondence of Maharaja Duleep Singh" by Sardar Ganda Singh (*PIHRC*, XXV, Part II, pp. 89 ff.)
145. The above account of Dalip Singh after his arrest at Aden is based on some letters published in the London *Times* in 1887 and 1888, records in CRO, and the "*Correspondence of Lord Dufferin*", Vol. III.

CHAPTER XI

THE ANNEXATION OF AVADH

It would appear from the history of Avadh, narrated in the preceding volume, that its political and military government was virtually in the hands of the British, though they recognized it theoretically as an independent and sovereign State. Although the internal administration was nominally left in the hands of the Nawab, he was subjected to constant control and interference even in this sphere. The British official records have drawn a very lurid picture of the internal condition of Avadh under this dual system of Government. How far this picture represents the actual state of things is not easy to determine, and will be discussed later in this chapter. The state of things as described by the British Government, and generally accepted as true by the British writers, with a few exceptions, may be summed up as follows and provisionally accepted as the basis of the subsequent history of the State until it was annexed by the British in 1856.

A series of unworthy rulers, profligate and extravagant in the extreme, drained the resources of the country. They scarcely concerned themselves with the affairs of the kingdom which were managed by corrupt officials. Surrounded by panders and parasites, and free from fears of foreign invasion and internal rebellions by the British guarantee, they indulged in sensual pleasures without any care for the happiness of the people, who groaned under heavy taxation and exactions of both royal officials and tyrannical landlords. Offices were openly bought and sold; much of the land was farmed out to large contractors who exacted as much as they could from the cultivator, not unoften at the point of British bayonet. The big landlords, called *Tālukdārs,* were petty tyrants who terribly oppressed the people, and were themselves coerced by the Nawab with the help of British troops. It was indeed a vicious system which cannot be too strongly condemned, and there is hardly any doubt that it was mainly brought about by the unusual relations subsisting between the British Government and the rulers of Avadh. The evils of the Subsidiary Alliance manifested themselves in full measure, though Avadh was theoretically an independent State. It did not enjoy the blessing of either the British rule or of the oriental despotism, but suffered in full measure from the glaring evils of both.

The depraved character of the Nawab, as pictured by the British, was an inevitable consequence of the system of British Protectorate, as has been noticed above, in connection with the system of Subsidiary Alliance. But howsoever bad the Nawabs might have been, they alone cannot be held responsible for the miserable state of affairs. The fault lay, to a large extent, in the heavy exactions of the British by way of growing charges for the maintenance of British subsidiary troops, and the impact it produced on the whole system of administration. Some liberal-minded Englishmen openly expressed their doubts whether the British or the Government of Avadh were more responsible for the chronic misrule of the country.[1] Yet, periodically, Resident and Governor-General, one after another, conveyed warnings to the Nawabs, admonished, and even threatened them with dire consequences, if they did not mend their ways. It never occurred to them that the fault was primarily in the system and not in the men. But though the British Lion roared, it gave its victim an unconscionably long time to die. For the Nawabs possessed one great merit in their eyes. As one British historian put it, although they "were, doubtless, bad rulers and bad men, it must be admitted they were good allies. False to their people—false to their own manhood—they were true to the British Government."[2] This redeeming virtue, which no doubt saved the Nawabs from early extinction, was displayed on many occasions and in manifold ways. They never cherished evil designs, or even ill feeling, against the British, and helped them with grain, carriage, cattle and cash Lord Hastings, engaged in a costly warfare, badly needed money, and a sum of two crores of Rupees was supplied by the Nawab of Avadh. As a reward, he was given the title and status of a King in 1819. This was probably not a mere display of good will, or dictated by a desire to humour the Nawab. By one stroke of pen "His Majesty of Oudh" was made a rival of the titular Emperor of Delhi, and this, it was fondly hoped, would break the solidarity of the Muslims in India, who did not yet reconcile themselves fully to the loss of power and liberty at the hands of the British. A further amount of a crore of Rupees and a half was exacted by Lord Amherst, and another amount of 62 lakhs of Rupees by Bentinck [3]

Lord William Bentinck, following in the footsteps of his predecessors, made an attempt to reform the ways of the Nawab. He personally visited Lakhnau in April, 1831, and uttered a threat in very plain language. He told the King that unless his territories were governed upon better principles, Avadh would share the fate of Tanjore and Carnatic, i.e., the British would take upon themselves "the entire management of the country and the King would be trans-

muted into a State pensioner".[4] The warning was afterwards communicated to the King in writing.

The threat of the extinction of Avadh as an independent kingdom had the desired effect. The minister, Hakim Mehdi, who had already effected some improvement in the administration, promised to exert himself more energetically, and even the King assured him of full support. But the same influences that had hitherto thwarted the efforts of the minister, were again exerted in opposing him. In vain did he turn to the Governor-General to help him in his laudable efforts. Commenting on this state of things Beveridge observes:

"Under these circumstances what was the duty of the British Government? Unquestionably to strengthen the hands of the minister, and more especially, when both he and his sovereign declared their inability to carry out the required reforms without extraneous aid, to furnish that aid liberally to any extent that might be necessary. Strange to say, the governor-general, after interfering so far with the internal management of Oude as to threaten its existence as an independent kingdom unless certain changes were introduced, refused, when applied to, to give the least assistance in carrying them into effect, and with singular inconsistency attempted to justify the refusal on the ground that the policy which he had adopted would not allow him to interfere. In vain did Hakim Mehdi argue that by the treaty made with the Marquis of Wellesley, the right of interference, at least so far as to give advice, was distinctly recognised; that the interference now asked was certainly not greater than that which the governor-general had just been exercising, and that the British government by standing aloof was making itself responsible for the future maladministration of Oude, since 'he who sees a blind man on the edge of a precipice, and will not put forth a hand to hold him back, is not innocent of his destruction'. Lord William Bentinck remained immoveable, and while complaining loudly of the domestic policy of Oude, obstinately refused to assist in improving it .. From his refusal to strengthen the hands of Hakim Mehdi, that minister found it impossible to maintain his position, and retired into private life."

The retired minister published a defence of his conduct in a local newspaper, and the misgovernment in Avadh "advanced with accelerated pace". As Beveridge remarks, "the courtiers of Oude did not reason very illogically when they inferred, from the inconsistency and caprice which marked" the conduct of the Governor-General, "that the object at which he was aiming was not so much to improve the government" of Avadh, "as to find in prevailing abuses a plausible pretext for usurping it".[5] It is now known that.

unknowingly, they had divined the truth. For while Bentinck refused to interfere in the administration of Avadh, he was seriously discussing various plans to bring that country under the direct control of the British Government. He considered various alternative proposals, from the appointment of a minister selected by the British and entrusted with full powers under the supervision of the Resident, to the outright annexation of the whole province. The scheme finally adopted by him was tantamount to the administration by the British for the interest of the people. The British Government would "become the guardian and trustee of the King of Oude, administer his affairs through native agency and in accordance with native institutions, and pay every single rupee into the royal treasury."[6]

This scheme was approved by the Court of Directors after a delay of two years, and the Governor-General was authorized to carry it into effect at such time and in such manner as might appear suitable to him. The Government of India were, however, instructed to announce, before they assumed the administration of Avadh, that as soon as the necessary reforms were effected, the administration of the State would be restored to the King, as was done in the case of Nāgpur.[7]

The British Resident at Lakhnau was, however, averse to the adoption of this scheme, and suggested, instead, the removal of the reigning King Nasir-ud-din, and installation of a new ruler without demanding anything as the price of his elevation to the throne. But before the Government of India took any final decision in this matter the King suddenly died on the night of the 7th of July, 1837. Poisoning was suspected, but there was no satisfactory evidence. As usual, the succession was disputed.

Sadat Ali, the grandfather of the deceased king, Nasir-ud-din, had ten sons, and was succeeded by his eldest son Ghazi-ud-din, the father of Nasir-ud-din. Nasir-ud-din had at one time acknowledged two sons, but later disavowed them, and the British Government, believing their pretensions to be unfounded, regarded Nasir-ud-daullah, the third and the eldest surviving son of Sadat Ali, "an old man and a cripple", as the legitimate successor according to Muslim law, and proposed to elevate him to the throne. But the Padshah Begum or the Dowager Queen supported one of the pretended sons, and advanced with him to take possession of the palace by force. The Resident and his assistant were busy arranging ceremonies for installing Nasir-ud-daullah, when they were overpowered by the Begum's followers, and the pretender was formally seated on the throne. But the British troops now arrived and attacked the palace. A short skirmish followed, in course of which thirty or forty of the

Begum's followers were killed or wounded, and a few of the British sepoys also suffered. The Begum and her protégé were made prisoners, and Nasir-ud-daullah was solemnly seated on the throne from which the pretender was just ejected by force. The Begum and the pretender were not allowed to reside within the dominion of Avadh, and removed to the Company's territories.[8]

A lurid light is thrown on the whole transaction by the deed of engagement executed by Nasir-ud-daullah on the night of 7 July, 1837, i.e. immediately after the death of Nasir-ud-din. It runs as follows:

"Lieutenant-Colonel John Low, the Resident, has apprised me, through Lieutenant Shakespear, his second assistant, of the death of Nasir-ud-din Hyder, king of Oude. The Resident has also communicated to me the substance of the orders of the Government of India respecting the necessity of new engagements on the (part of the ?) Company's Government with the Oude State; and I hereby declare, that in the case of my being placed on the throne, I will agree to sign any new treaty that the Governor-General may dictate".

At the foot of the Persian paper Nasir-ud-daullah wrote in Persian, "It is accepted and ágreed upon," and affixed the impression of his seal.

Even Lord Auckland, the Governor-General, could not give his support to this act of duress. In his minute, dated 11th July, 1837, after approving of the general policy followed by Low and sanctioning the elevation of Nasir-ud-daullah to the throne, he observed: "I should undoubtedly have been better pleased if he had not in this moment of exigency accepted the unconditional engagement of submissiveness which the new King has signed. This document may be liable to misconstruction, and it was not warranted by anything contained in the instructions issued to Colonel Low".[8a]

But whatever may be the moral scruples of the Governor-General at the unauthorized act of Colonel Low, which was both immoral and indecent, to say the least of it, the blank cheque which the claimant to the throne was forced to sign under duress, was cashed at a high price by the Government of India. Nasir-ud-daullah had to accept a new treaty, by which the old native levies of the kingdom were to be replaced by a new force, organized and commanded by British officers, at the cost of the Government of Avadh. It was further stipulated that the Nawab, in concert with the British Resident, should forthwith proceed to improve the administration, and if "oppression, anarchy and misrule should hereafter, at any time, prevail within Oude dominions, the British Government would be

entitled to appoint its own officer to the management of any part or whole of the Province, for so long a period as it may deem necessary, the surplus receipts, in such a case, after defraying all charges, to be paid into the King's Treasury.[9]

The British authorities in London, however, categorically disallowed this treaty of 1837. The arguments advanced by them were very sound. They rightly pointed out that the treaty of 1801 made it obligatory on the British Government to defend the territory of Avadh, and a large part of this kingdom had been ceded to defray the expenses of the troops to be maintained for the purpose. If, therefore, any further contingent was regarded as necessary for the protection of Avadh, it ought to be maintained at the expense of the Company and not of the King of Avadh. Further, as the new King, backed up by the British, was reported to be of good character, he must be given a fair trial under the provisions of the existing treaty, and no new conditions, providing for assumption of government by the British, should be imposed upon him.

Every unprejudiced person would admit the force and logic of the arguments, but, unhappily, the Court of Directors, in order to save the face of the Government of India, left it to the Governor-General to decide upon the time and mode of communicating the abrogation of the treaty to the King of Avadh. In consequence of it, this communication was never made. The King of Avadh was simply informed that in order to relieve him of his heavy burden, the Company would pay for the expenses of the new auxiliary force which was formed under the provisions of the new treaty, but he was kept completely ignorant of the all-important fact that the entire treaty was abrogated. The Government of India probably entertained the hope that the Government at Home might still revise its opinion, and in any case held that the disclosure of truth would weaken its prestige in the eyes of the Indians. But whatever might be their excuse or defence, the course pursued by them was not only inexpedient, but positively dishonest.[10]

For the next ten years the Government of India did not take any active interest in the affairs of Avadh, probably because their hands were too full with the momentous events in Afghānistān, Sindh and the Panjāb, to which reference has been made above. But in 1847 Lord Hardinge turned his attention again to the dreadful misrule in Avadh under its young, gay and profligate ruler. Wājid Ali Shah, who had just succeeded to the throne. The Governor-General visited Lakhnau and like Bentinck, strongly admonished the ruler. He plainly told Wājid Ali that the British Government would give him two years' time for making a final attempt to set his house in

order. But if he failed to remove the abuses and restore normal conditions during this period, he must be prepared for the consequences provided in the treaty of 1837. He thus regarded the treaty, which was disallowed by the Court of Directors, to be still valid in 1847. Two years passed away and no sign of improvement was visible. But the outbreak of the Second Sikh War stayed the hands of the Government of India, and once more Avadh was saved by external circumstances.

But the new Governor-General, Lord Dalhousie, was not altogether oblivious of Avadh. He knew that the final act of the drama was near at hand, and thought it prudent to have a written record of the condition of Avadh as a possible justification for its impending annexation. Accordingly, he asked Sir W. H. Sleeman, the Resident in Avadh, to "make a tour throughout the country and ascertain its actual state by personal inspection". Sleeman made a tour during 1849 and 1850. His report gives a gruesome picture of the King and his court, and vividly describes in detail the anarchical condition of the country, in which the strong devoured the weak with impunity, and a powerful class, with the connivance of the court officials, whom they liberally bribed with their spoils, perpetrated all kinds of outrages and rapine upon the hapless populace. The *Tālukdārs* of Avadh were a regular terror to the masses. They kept the country in a perpetual state of disturbance and rendered life, property and industry everywhere insecure. "Robbery and murder become their diversion, their sport, and they think no more of taking the lives of men, women and children, who never offended them, than those of deer and wild hogs."[11]

How far this picture may be regarded as an accurate representation of facts, it is difficult to say. Sleeman's attitude towards the Gwālior State—how he wished it to be swallowed by an earthquake—has been mentioned above. Secondly, it was a matter of public knowledge that the annexation of Avadh, *on grounds of misrule* was urged by many, for there was, unfortunately, no lack of heir calling for the Doctrine of Lapse, nor could any charge of contumacy or intrigue be possibly thought of in the case of the ever-obliging king of Avadh. In such circumstances, the exaggeration of misrule in Avadh, on the part of a British official, was not unnatural. Such a suspicion becomes very strong when one reads in the report frequent references to the desire of *all classes of people* in Avadh that the existing administration should be replaced by that of the British. That Sleeman was absolutely wrong in this respect is proved both by the testimony of Bishop Heber, quoted later, as well as the events of 1857.[12] Similar error in forming a judgment of the nature and

extent of misrule cannot, therefore, be ruled out altogether. Besides, there are circumstances which make it difficult to regard the report of Sleeman as the result of an impartial and judicial enquiry, and its author as a disinterested person, so far as Avadh was concerned. In a letter, dated September 16, 1848, Dalhousie offered Sleeman the lucrative post of the Administrator of Avadh. After mentioning that in 1847 the King of Avadh was given to understand that if the administration of the country did not materially improve within two years, the management of the country would be taken by the British Government, Dalhousie adds that "there seems little reason to expect or to hope that in October, 1849, any amendment whatever will have been effected", and informs Sleeman that the Government have chosen him for the reconstruction of the administration of Avadh. Dalhousie, therefore, asked Sleeman to accept the office of the Resident at Lakhnau "with special reference to the great changes which, in all probability will take place". It is difficult not to agree with the following comments on this made by two Englishmen, probably officers of the East India Company: "Colonel Sleeman was appointed Resident in 1849, and his appointment sealed the doom of Oude and of its dynasty. Colonel Sleeman was the emissary of a foregone conclusion. He affected to inspect and make a report, but the character of the report was determined for him before he entered Oude. He professed to examine, but he was under orders to sentence; he pretended to try, but he was instructed simply to condemn."[12a] In a petition dated May, 1857, the 'ex-King of Oude' made various allegations about the interference in the internal administration of his kingdom by Sleeman, which produced chaos and confusion, and the way in which he collected evidence by asking the people to submit to him complaints against the Government. The two British officers, mentioned above, have given a number of concrete instances which fully substantiate the charges brought by the ex-King against Sleeman. They further observe: "Colonel Sleeman made a tour through the kingdom, receiving petitions and complaints on the most liberal scale, and illustrating at every stage the words of Hooker that "he who goeth about to persuade a multitude that they are not so well governed as they ought to be, shall never want attentive and favourable hearers".[12b] The same two officers continue: "In upwards of a hundred and fifty instances, Colonel Sleeman directly and unwarrantably interfered with the action of the Oude Government, and at the same time clandestinely as well as openly, collected every fact, and every rumour, false or true, which could tell on English opinion to its disparagement. To such a length did he carry out his instructions, that he encouraged the disaffected subjects of the King, wherever such could

be found, to enter their names upon a list, complaining of the rule of the Oude Government, and expressing a desire for the assumption of the country by the East India Company."[12c]

In 1854 Sleeman was obliged to retire on grounds of health and was succeeded by General Outram. Much has been made of the fact that the report of Outram on the condition of Avadh supports that of Sleeman. But, fortunately, Outram himself offers the true explanation. He admits at the very outset: "In the absence of any personal experience in this country, I am, of course, entirely dependent for my information on what I find in the Residency Records, and can ascertain through the channels which supplied my predecessor".[12d]

There is a volume of official literature on the maladministration of Avadh, and both contemporary and later British writers have justified the annexation of the country on this ground. It is therefore necessary to refer to statements made by responsible men which give an altogether different view. In a letter written by the Marquess of Hastings to the Nawab of Avadh in 1818, he assured "the Nawab of his unqualified approbation and satisfaction at witnessing the high state of cultivation in which he found the country, as well as its increased populousness, and at the happiness and comfort of all His Excellency's subjects"[12e] A more detailed contradiction to the prevailing reports about the misgovernment of Avadh is given by Bishop Heber who toured through the country in 1824-5. "I was pleased, however, and surprised," says he, "after all which I had heard of Oude, to find the country so completely under the plough; since, were the oppression so great, as is sometimes stated, I cannot think that we should witness so considerable a population or so much industry." Heber attributes the difficulties of the administration to the interference of the British. "The truth, perhaps, is", says he, "that for more than a year back, since the aid of British troops has been withheld, affairs have been in some respects growing better." Heber also inquired "if the people thus oppressed desired, as I had been assured they did, to be placed under English Government". He also refers to Captain Lockitt, whose knowledge of the local language enabled him to converse freely with the people, as having asked the same question. But the people fervently desired to be saved from 'that misery'. Heber also pays high tribute to the Nawab in the following words: "He was fond, as I have observed, of study, and in all points of oriental philology and philosophy, is really reckoned a learned man, besides having a strong taste for mechanics and chemistry......No single act of violence or oppression has ever been ascribed to him, or supposed to have been per-

petrated with his knowledge."[12f] Successive Residents,—Captain Shakespear, Mr. Davidson, and Colonel Richmond—found on the whole the adiministration of Avadh not worse than the neighbouring dominions of the East India Company.[12g]

Much has been made of the repeated admonitions given to the Nawabs without any effect. "From 1839 to 1847", wrote Lord Dalhousie, "three kings successively sat upon the throne of Oude, but the state of the province in the last-mentioned year was in no respect better than it had been at any previous period, in spite of the earnest advice and solemn warnings repeatedly offered to the King, and urged by the authority of the Supreme Government."[12h] This is not, however, either an accurate statement of fact, or a simple unvarnished truth. Lord Auckland, the Governor-General, wrote to His Majesty the King of Avadh, Nasir-ud-daullah, on July 8, 1839, to the following effect: "From the period you ascended the throne, your majesty has, in comparison with times past, greatly improved the kingdom."[12i]. As a matter of fact, according to contemporary British writers Nasir-ud-daullah fully deserved the praise. "Notwithstanding his advanced age and many infirmities, he greatly improved the state of his kingdom, ameliorated the condition of the agriculturist, introduced reforms in the police, revenue, judicial, and finance departments, encouraged commerce, erected several public works of great utility, such as schools, colleges, serais or resting places for travellers, dug tanks, wells. &c., and filled the coffers of his treasury."[12j] The evidence, mentioned above, of the two Residents, Captain Shakespear and Mr. Davidson, whose terms of office fell between 1839 and 1847, certainly does not "warrant the uniform lurid colouring bestowed on Avadh Government by Dalhousie."[12k]

In the next place, Dalhousie refers to the earnest advice and solemn warnings, and cleverly insinuates as if no heed was paid to them by the Nawabs of Avadh. But this is far from being the case. Reference has been made above how an earnest effort was made by Hakim Mehdi, the minister of the Nawab, to improve administration, but Bentinck, who gave the warnings, did not raise even his little finger to help the Government of Avadh. History repeated itself when Lord Hardinge again gave warning to the Nawab in his letter dated 23 November, 1847. What followed is thus described by the two contemporary British officers referred to above:

"The King of Oude, as early as was practicable, that is to say, in the spring of 1848, applied through his minister, the Nawab Ali Nukur Khan, to the British Resident for a plan for the introduction of the British system of administration into his dominions, to be tried in the first instance in such portions of them as adjoined the British

territories. In consequence of this application, the Resident, Col. Richmond, assisted the King with his suggestions, and despatched his assistant, Major (then Captain) Bird, to Agra, with the sanction of His Majesty, for the purpose of communicating personally with Mr. Thomason, the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces, and of framing under his advice such a scheme of administration as was desired by His Majesty through the minister above named. In accordance with His Majesty's wishes Captain Bird framed proposals, which he submitted to Mr. Thomason, who took them into consideration, and remarked upon them liberally, with a view to bring them into shape and system. Captain Bird returned to Lucknow, bringing with him the scheme so framed or modified by Mr. Thomason, and submitted it to the King's minister, who entirely approved it; but Colonel Richmond, the Resident, decided, before it was submitted to the King officially, it should be sent for approval to the Governor-General...... It was forwarded to the Secretary to the Government in the Foreign Department at Calcutta, and he rejected it on the ground that "if His Majesty the King of Oude would give up the whole of his dominions, the East India Government would think of it, but that it was not worth while to take so much trouble about a portion."[121]

This circumstantial narrative exposes the hollowness of the British solicitude for the improvement of the administration of Avadh. Nor can one easily dismiss the following serious allegations based on the facts noted above:

"It is doubtful whether the Indian Government had at any time lost sight of the intention avowed by Lord Wellesley to appropriate Oude entirely. And it may be for that very reason that, from the date of its avowal, representations were spread abroad from time to time that Oude was misgoverned, that its people were oppressed, that its revenues and institutions were falling into decay".[12m]

The systematic misrepresentation of facts and withholding of the relevant facts and considerations on the other side, had, however, done their work. When, in 1854, Dalhousie found time to take up the question of Avadh for a final decision, the official circles, both in India and England, were more or less convinced that it was imperative for the British Government to take upon itself the administration of Avadh. But there were very real and sharp differences of opinion regarding the manner in which it was to be accomplished. One school of opinion was in favour of Avadh being ruled by the British in the interest of her people, without seeking to derive any benefit for themselves. It may be recalled that Bentinck actually outlined such a policy. The Resident, Sleeman, whose views

of the internal condition of Avadh have been quoted above, was strongly impressed by the necessity of taking over the direct administration of Avadh. But his definite advice was: "Assume the administration, but do not grasp the revenues of the country". He recommended that "the whole revenues of Oude should be expended for the benefit of the Royal family and people of Oude, and the British Government should disclaim any wish to derive any pecuniary advantage from assuming to itself the administration." "If we do this," said he, "all India will think us right." The same view was expressed by Sir Henry Lawrence. He supported the scheme recommended by Bentinck: "Let Oude be at last governed," said he, "not for one man, the king, but for him and his people. Let the administration of the country, as far as possible, be native. *Let not a rupee come into the Company's coffers.*"

As against this school of moderate and enlightened views there was another, imbued with imperial ideas of confiscation and annexation of Indian States with appropriation of their revenues. Sleeman pointed out that this course would "be most profitable in a pecuniary view, but most injurious in a political one" Apart from the special case of Avadh, Sleeman was opposed, as a general principle, to the annexation of Native States, which he considered to be "dangerous to our rule in India, and prejudicial to the best interests of the country." "The system of annexing and absorbing Native States," said he, "so popular with our Indian services, and so much advocated by a certain class of writers in public journals —might some day render us too visibly dependent upon our Native Army." On another occasion he uttered words which proved to be prophetic. "The Native States I consider to be breakwaters, and when they are all swept away we shall be left to the mercy of our Native Army, which may not always be sufficiently under our control."[13]

The final decision rested with Lord Dalhousie. He read the reports of Sleeman as well as those of Colonel James Outram, who succeeded him as Resident of Avadh, and General Low, a former Resident, mentioned above. Sleeman and Low, well-known as averse to the annexation of Native States, both recommended assumption of the administration of Avadh on the ground of chronic misrule, which continued unchecked and could not be remedied in any other way. But they were opposed to the revenues being taken by the British Government for its own benefit. The names of these persons carried so great a weight that possibly even the annexation of Avadh, in the manner suggested by them, would not have provoked any strong protest. But Dalhousie was an imperialist to the core. He proposed to put

a very thin veil upon the annexation of Avadh, but at the same time appropriate all its revenues. He proposed that the King of Avadh should theoretically retain the status and position of a sovereign, but "vest all power, jurisdiction, rights and claims in the hands of the East India Company," which would carry on the administration, and keep the surplus revenues to itself. Strictly speaking, it was not annexation of Avadh, as the kingdom was not to be incorporated with the British dominions, but it is not easy to understand the meaning of territorial sovereignty, without territorial rights or territorial revenues, which was left to the King.[14]

Still more ingenious was the method suggested by Dalhousie for getting the consent of the Nawab to his self-annihilation, for he thought, "it would not be expedient or right, to extract this consent by means of menace or compulsion." He seriously suggested that the Nawab should be informed by a letter that the British had decided "to declare the treaty of 1801 at an end, to quit the territory of Oude, and to withdraw the entire subsidiary force within the British frontier" (but to retain possession of the lands ceded by the Nawab for the maintenance of this force). The Nawab should then be reminded of the serious consequences, like insurrection, which are sure to follow the withdrawal of the British force, and hopes held out to him that the only way of averting it would be to sign a treaty surrendering the entire administration of the territory.

Lord Dalhousie thought "that the King's fear of the vengeance which his own subjects would exact if he were left alone, would induce him to sign the treaty; and if not, the withdrawal of the British troops would be the signal for such an insurrection, as would induce the King, within a month, to agree to whatever stipulations might be offered to him by the British Government." It may be added that this view was shared by other experienced officials who held that "our departure would be followed by insurrections which would compel our return."[15]

But this ingenious device of obtaining the free consent of the King evidently involved some risk of the King not recalling the British troops at all. Hence it did not find favour with the Council of the Governor-General. The Court of Directors very frankly observed that unless the Governor-General was virtually certain that the threat would work in the desired way, it should not be tried.

Lord Dalhousie's suggestions in a sense do him credit. He was evidently embarrassed by the way in which the abrogation of the treaty of 1837 was not only withheld from the King of Avadh, but he was led to believe that it was still in force. For, apart from Lord Hardinge's specific reference to it, noted above, the treaty was in-

cluded in a collection of treaties, still in force, compiled in 1845. It was obvious to him that the King might very well demand that even taking the worst view, nothing more severe than the penal clause of that treaty should be put in force. Even if it were explained to the Nawab that the treaty was not ratified by the Court of Directors and therefore did not exist, the King, apart from his indignation at the duplicity practised upon him, might demand that the least compensation that he might reasonably expect was a new treaty drawn up on similar terms to remove the technical defect. In anticipation of all these,[16a] Dalhousie had instructed the Resident to say, in the event of this suggestion being made by the King, that the supreme authorities in England rejected the proposal, and experience had shown that the remedy proposed by the treaty of 1837 would be wholly inadequate. These were lame excuses, and the absurdity of the second is apparent from the fact that the scheme suggested by Dalhousie differed little in substance. The Governor-General's Council and the authorities in England, however, did not appreciate the transparent disguise under which Dalhousie proposed to grab the kingdom of Avadh, and preferred a straightforward annexation of the country. The Governor-General was due to retire, but expressed a keen desire to continue at his post[16] in order to accomplish the delicate task of extinguishing a friendly State which, with all its faults, had stood faithfully by the British in weal and woe for nearly a century. At the beginning of January, 1856, Dalhousie received, by the same mail, two despatches from the Court of Directors, one sanctioning the extension of his service, and the other approving of the annexation of Avadh. Dalhousie immediately sent detailed instructions to Outram, the Resident at Lakhnau. "He was to endeavour to persuade the king of Oude formally to abdicate his sovereign functions, and to make over, by a solemn treaty, the government of his territories to the East India Company. In the event of his refusal, a proclamation was to be issued, declaring the whole of Oude to be British territory."[17]

The rest of this painful episode may be briefly told. On 4 February, 1856, the Resident had an interview with "His Majesty" Wajid Ali, and presented him a draft of the proposed treaty together with a letter from the Governor-General urging him to accept it. But at this momentous crisis Wazid Ali showed a kingly dignity and sense of honour, hardly to be expected from a man of such character as has been depicted by the British. He "declared that treaties were only between equals; that there was no need for him to sign it. The British "had taken his honour and his country and he would not ask them for the means of maintaining his life." So saying, he

took off the turban from his head and placed it in the hands of the Resident. Outram could not, by any means, persuade him to sign the treaty or accept the proposed stipend of twelve lakhs. Thereupon a proclamation, copy of which was sent from Calcutta, was issued, "declaring the province of Oude to be thenceforth, for ever, a component part of the British Indian Empire."[17a]

The curtain thus fell upon the tragic drama of Avadh, but not upon the long-drawn agony of her people. To explain this it is necessary to say a few words about the immediate consequence of the annexation, which the British declared from the house-tops to be a painful measure dictated alone by humanitarian considerations for the good of the people.

As in the case of Nāgpur, the annexation of Avadh was accompanied by needless acts of spoliation of a cruel and barbarous character. Various charges were brought which were thus summed up by Kaye:

"It was charged against us that our Officers had turned the stately palaces of Lucknow into stalls and kennels, that delicate women, the daughters or the companions of Kings, had been sent adrift, homeless and helpless, that treasure-houses had been violently broken open and despoiled, that the private property of the royal family had been sent to the hammer, and that other vile things had been done, very humiliating to the King's people, but far more disgraceful to our own."[18]

Canning, the Governor-General, referred these charges to the newly appointed Chief Commissioner of Avadh, but repeated reminders, and even admonitions, could not elicit any satisfactory explanation. It is, therefore, permissible to hold that the charges were substantially true, though this is denied by many British historians.[18a]

The deposition of the King of Avadh and the introduction of the British system of administration very adversely affected all classes of people, and caused serious grievances and injuries to them, such as normally followed almost every annexation of a new kingdom by the British. But whereas common convention condones many sufferings caused by a military conquest, as they are considered inevitable, there are less excuses, and therefore greater discontent and keener sense of resentment, where transfer of sovereignty is effected more peaceably and on grounds that are considered to be extremely unjust and iniquitous. In Avadh, as in most Native States in India, quite a large number of people lived on the bounty of the court. These ranged from the highest aristocracy, related by ties

of blood to the royal family, to the vulgar parasites who earned their livelihood by the extravagance, profligacy and licentiousness of the court. Between these two extremes were the numerous functionaries and tradesmen of the court, titled pensioners, and so forth. All these were ruined when the King vacated his throne. "Men and women of high birth, tenderly reared and luxuriously surrounded, were suddenly cast adrift on the world without the means of subsistence. Some warded off starvation by selling their shawls and trinkets."[19] "Families, which had never before been outside the Zenana, used to go out at night and beg their bread."[20] The Government order provided for such a contingency, but the local officials made such inordinate delay in preparing the pension list, that untold hardships were caused to many before any steps were taken by Sir Henry Lawrence. 'Charity delayed is charity denied',—proved unfortunately too true in many cases. The great landholders of Avadh, generally known as *Tālukdārs*, suffered equally from the new policy of land-settlement, in which their rights were mostly ignored, and direct engagements were made with village proprietors who had hitherto been content to occupy and to cultivate their lands under the old *Tālukdārs*. But the cultivators were also in great misery, as the assessment was very high. The Chief Commissioner, in answer to the complaint made to the Governor-General, wrote in April, 1857, i.e. about a year after the annexation: "The revenue measures have been unsatisfactory. Reductions have been made to the amount of fifteen, twenty, thirty and even thirty-five per cent., showing how heavy was last year's assessment. The *Tālukdārs* have also, I fear, been hardly dealt with. At least in the Fyzabad Division they have lost half their villages—some have lost all."[21] To add insult to injury, many of the forts possessed by the *Tālukdārs* were dismantled and their armed retainers were disarmed and disbanded. Of the sixty thousand sepoys of Avadh, less than a quarter was retained in service, but the rest, about fifty thousand in number, were 'cast adrift upon the province with small pensions or gratuities.' The new system of taxation also proved irksome to all. A heavy tax was laid upon opium, and "the prices of other necessaries were raised, if not by direct imposts, by contract systems, which had equally injurious effects". The new judicial regulations, with their increased formalities, delays, and expenses, were causing scarcely less uneasiness and less popular dislike of the new Government.

This chapter, dealing with the extinction of the kingdom of Avadh, may be fittingly concluded with an extract from the letter written by Lord Amherst to Ghazi-ud-din Hyder, King of Avadh,

in grateful recognition of the loan of one crore of Rupees during the First Burmese War, advanced by the latter.

"The benefits and fruits of our amity, which have existed from days of yore, are impressed upon the heart of every Englishman, both here and in Europe, as indelibly as if they had been engraven upon adamant; nor will lapse of time or change of circumstances efface from the memory of the British nation so irrefragable a proof, so irresistible an argument, of the fraternal sentiments of your Majesty".[22]

This letter was written on 14 October, 1825. It might well serve as an epitaph of the extinct kingdom of Avadh, "engraven upon adamant" on 4 February, 1856.

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1. The following comments are made in *CHBFP*, II. 409
"The pressure for payment, combined with the Resident's interference in the internal affairs of Oudh, rendered administration extremely difficult, and matters drifted from bad to worse"
Bell observes, "The misgovernment of Oudh continued .. ... *in consequence* of the incessant meddling and interference, and greedy exaction of loans, by which nearly four crores were taken from the Oudh treasury in twenty years" (Bell-II 20). Kaye observes. "In truth it was a vicious system, one that can hardly be too severely condemned. By it we established a Double Government of the worst kind. The political and military government was in the hands of the Company, the internal administration of Oude territories still rested with the Nawab-Wuzeer In other words, hedged in and protected by the British battallions, a bad race of Eastern princes were suffered to do, or not to do. what they liked Under such influences it is not strange that disorder of every kind ran riot over the whole length and breadth of the land" But Kaye had the candour to admit that the Nawab alone could not be blamed for the misrule in Avadh "Whether", he says, "the British or the Oude Government were more responsible for it was somewhat doubtful to every clear understanding and every unprejudiced mind" (Kaye-I, I. 113-4,126). Bishop Heber's opinion to the same effect is quoted later.
2. Ibid, 118.
3. The Nawab was first "induced to lend the British Government a crore (£1,000,000) of Rupees, for the prosecution of the war against Nepāl. When this was expended by the governor-general's council on other objects a second crore was lent, but only under great pressure" (*CHI*, V. 575). Beveridge speaks of three successive loans of £1,000,000 each, of which only one had been repaid by the cession of some territories conquered from Nepāl (III 543). This land had hardly any material value. The king of Avadh also advanced a crore of Rupees to the British during the Burmese campaign of 1824-5, and Lord Amherst wrote an effusive letter expressing his gratitude for this generous help "in case of extreme emergency and need". In 1829 the British Government consented—so runs the word in official records—to receive as a special loan the sum of 62,40,000 Rupees, the interest of which was to form a provision for certain members of the royal family of Avadh, and in case of their death without heirs, to revert to the king of Avadh But nothing was paid out of this to anybody. For details of these exactions from Avadh, cf *Dacoitee*, pp. 63, 64, 68, 94.
4. Kaye-I, I 121. The actual word used is 'prisoner' (in the printed text) which seems to be a misprint for 'pensioner'. Cf Beveridge, III 214
5. This whole disgraceful episode, and the passages quoted are taken from Beveridge, III. 214-5 Cf. also Mill, IX 373
6. Kaye-I, I. 122-3.
7. Ibid, 124.
8. Thornton, VI 74-80
8a. *Dacoitee*, pp 85-6.

9. Jackson, 123.
10. Kaye-I, I. 126-9.
11. Beveridge, III. 546; Kaye-I, I. 134-5.
12. It is generally admitted that during the outbreak of 1857, popular discontent against the British rule was at its highest in Avadh, and the forcible dethronement of the King of Avadh and the annexation of the country by the British was regarded by many as one of the major causes of the outbreak. cf. ch. XVII.
12a. *Dacoitee*, pp 109 ff.
12b. Ibid, 130.
12c. Ibid, 131.
12d. Ibid, 134
12e. Ibid, 72-3.
12f. Ibid, 73-6.
12g. Ibid, 97.
12h. Ibid, 98.
12i. Ibid, 92.
12j. Ibid, 93.
12k. Ibid, 99.
12l. Ibid, 101-2.
12m. Ibid, 72 (Slight changes have been made in the quotation).
13. Kaye-I, I. 135-8
14 Ibid, 144.
15. Jackson, 138, 141.
15a. The King of Avadh seems to have actually referred to the provisions of this treaty. Regarding the legality of the provisions of the treaty of 1837, Bell observes: "A treaty concluded with every formality between the Governor-General of India and the Sovereign of Oude—signed, and sealed, and ratified, and copies exchanged,—could not be cancelled by the Home authorities without the full knowledge and consent of the sovereign of Oude; without, in fact, a fresh negotiation with that express object. The Governor-General had full power to conclude treaties, and the final exchange of ratified copies made the treaty binding upon both parties." 'In 1847 Lord Hardinge threatened to enforce the stipulations of the treaty of 1837. Lord Dalhousie pretended it to be cancelled.'
16. On 18 October, 1853, Dalhousie wrote to Wood: "I would ask you to tell me frankly whether you wish to make a change in the summer of 1854, or whether it would fall in with your plans and wishes to keep me here as long as I can stay ..If I were to take Oude in hand, and if the period fixed for my relief were to come before I had completed my business, my care for my own reputation would be stronger than even my desire to get home, and I would naturally wish to ask to stay and finish my handy work and not to give my successor the honour of which I should have had the real merit". (Quoted in *PIHC*, XX. 272).
17 Kaye, op cit. 148.
17a. Ibid, 150-1.
18. Ibid, 404-5.
18a. Cf. very pertinent observations of Kaye on this point (Ibid, 495-6).
19. Ibid, 419.
20. Ibid, 420 fn.
21. Kaye-I, III. 429.
22. *Dacoitee*, p. 68.

CHAPTER XII

ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM

I. THE EAST INDIA COMPANY AND THE BRITISH CROWN

The problem of Indian administration did not constitute a vital issue in English politics at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The Act of 1784 had laid down the general framework, and English politicians paid but scant attention to the matter until the periodical revision of the Charter of the East India Company after every twenty years brought the issue before the Parliament. Reference has been made above to the renewal of the Charter of the East India Company by the British Parliament in 1813, when a great deal of theoretical discussions took place about the line on which a definite policy of Indian administration should develop. These discussions, in particular a speech delivered by Lord Grenville, indicated certain general principles held by the advanced section of political thinkers. The Charter Act of 1813 actually made but little changes in the system, save and except the abolition of the Company's monopoly of Indian trade and a clear assertion of the sovereignty of the British crown in India. Still the provisions of the Act and the discussions preceding it showed the influence of the prevailing tendencies of the time, which may be summed up under the following heads.

1. Gradual strengthening of the sovereignty of the British crown over E.I. Company's possessions in India.
2. Elimination of the mercantile interests of the Company.
3. Abolition of patronage in making appointments, by substituting competitive examination for nomination.

The last two were regarded as necessary steps for the ultimate assumption of Indian Government by the Crown. These ideas were not yet clearly conceived, nor were they backed by popular demands. But they consciously or unconsciously influenced the British policy towards India when it came to be formulated at the time of next periodical revisions of the Charter. This is amply illustrated by the Charter Acts of 1833 and 1853, and the discussion in Parliament in connection therewith.

Before the next periodical renewal of the Charter of the Company a wave of liberalism had been passing over the British people. It resulted in the Reform Bill (1832), Law Reform, the Factory Act (1833), the Abolition of Slavery (1833), Poor Law (1834) and

various other liberal measures. The Directors of the East India Company took note of the changing mood of the people and, to remove any difficulty at the time of the renewal of the Charter, followed a liberal policy of reform in India. The appointment of Lord William Cavendish-Bentinck as Governor-General in 1828 was probably due to this policy, and the liberal measures associated with him as well as with Munro and Elphinstone are largely due to the new liberal spirit in Britain.

This spirit largely influenced the Charter Act of 1833 which sought to give effect to the three principles mentioned above. The Act has been rightly described by Lord Morley as "certainly the most extensive measure of Indian Government between Mr. Pitt's famous Act of 1784 and Queen Victoria's assumption of the Government of India", and he even proceeded so far as to say that "there is nothing so important as that Act".[1] The Act effected important changes in various directions and it will be convenient to refer to them in connection with the discussion of appropriate topics in the subsequent sections.

The most notable change was that effected in the position and status of the Company. By the Act of 1813 the Company lost the monopoly of Indian trade, which was thrown open to all British subjects, but it retained the monopoly of the China trade and of trading in tea. The Act of 1833 not only abolished this monopoly with effect from 22 April, 1834, but enacted "that the said Company shall, with all convenient speed after the said twenty-second day of April, 1834, close their commercial business, and make sale of all their merchandize. and abstain from all commercial business".[2] Thus "the Union of the trader and the sovereign" was finally dissolved Provision was, however, made for the payment of 10½ per cent. dividend to the share-holders from Indian revenues, and for the accumulation of 12 million pounds for the purchase of the Company's stock. In 1813, the Company had vehemently, and successfully, opposed European Colonisation in India, but the Act of 1833 removed all restrictions on the free admission of Europeans into India.

The Company was, however, successful in the most essential matters affecting their material interest. There was a strong section in the House of Commons who advocated the transfer of the Government of India to the British Crown. Mr. Buckingham regarded it as preposterous that the political government of an immense empire should be left in the hands of a Joint Stock Company. Far more interesting was his suggestion that the supreme council in India should include representatives of both British and Indian population

"in order to make a beginning, at least, of that system of self-government to which they ought to advance with all our Colonies as fast as possible".[3] Eighty-five years were to pass before the British Parliament accepted the idea. The Parliament of 1833 was swayed by a vigorous speech of Macaulay in the House of Commons on 10 July, 1833, in which he argued, in his inimitable language and with a wealth of details, that the Company must be retained as the organ of government for India. His main contention was that no minister should venture to propose "that a revenue of twenty millions a year—an army of two hundred thousand men—a civil service abounding with lucrative situations—should be left to the disposal of the crown without any check whatever". He admitted that the House of Commons was the check provided by the constitution on the abuse of the royal prerogative. "But", he hastened to add, "that this House is, or is likely ever to be, an efficient check on abuses practised in India, I altogether deny". He was strongly of opinion that the House of Commons had enough business already and would not have the necessary time to 'look into Indian affairs as we look into British affairs'. Besides, he pointed out that the House has not "the necessary knowledge, nor has it motives to acquire that knowledge". The British public were supremely indifferent to Indian affairs. "A broken head in Cold Bath Fields", said Macaulay, "produces a greater sensation among us than three pitched battles in India". Even the members of the House of Commons were no better. As an instance Macaulay pointed out that when the President of the Board of Control made his most able and interesting statement of the measures which he intended to propose for the government of a hundred millions of human beings, the attendance was not so large as he had seen it on a turnpike-bill or a rail-road bill.[4]

The history of the administration of India under the Crown since 1858 has fully justified the apprehensions expressed by Macaulay. It would hardly be an exaggeration to say that the utter inefficiency of the House of Commons as a check upon the abuses in the administration of India, which Macaulay foreshadowed in 1833, was equally true down to the end of the nineteenth century.

Macaulay's view prevailed, and the East India Company got a further lease of life for twenty years. But significant changes were made in the new Act. The Act of 1813 had merely asserted the undoubted sovereignty of the British Crown over the Company's possessions in India. The Act of 1833 proceeded one step further. The Company was allowed to retain its territorial possessions and its administrative and political powers for another term of twenty

years, but these were to be held by the Company "in trust for His Majesty, his heirs and successors".

Attention may be drawn to the provision made in the Act of 1833 for the repayment of the capital of the East India Company *in forty years or earlier should the Company be deprived of its rule over India.* This provision, inoccuous in itself, is very significant as an indication of a probable contingency that may arise, at a not very remote period, when the Government of India might be assumed by the British Crown.

As the time for the next renewal of the Company's Charter drew near, opposition to its continuance was again voiced, not only in England but also in India. It was a strange phenomenon. Hitherto the opposition was confined to the Englishmen—merchants, politicians, radicals or humanitarians—but in 1853 the strongest opposition came from the Indians. The inhabitants of the three Presidencies sent signed petitions to the Parliament against the granting of any further renewal of the Charter of the Company. The main grounds of their opposition to any further extension of the Company's rule were the defects in the system of administration from Indian point of view. The chief grievances of the Indians were that the promises held out in the Charter of 1833 for appointing Indians to higher posts were not fulfilled, and that the Indians, though well qualified for the purpose, had no voice in their own administration. This demand could not be altogether ignored. On 2 April, 1852, Lord Derby, while moving for a Select Committee to enquire into Indian affairs, told the House "that this is your bounden duty in the interests of humanity, of benevolence, and of morality and religion, that as far and as fast as you can do it safely, wisely and prudently, the inhabitants of India should be gradually entrusted with more and more of the superintendence of their own internal affairs". "Both the Houses of Parliament appointed Select Committees of Enquiry in 1852 who examined a large number of witnesses and collected a vast amount of evidence on the state of India at the time. On the basis of these enquiries the Charter Act of 1853 was framed".[5]

In reality, the Charter Act of 1853 did very little to satisfy Indian aspirations. The temporary character of the lease of life extended to the Company was further emphasized, as the Act provided that the "Indian territories should remain under the government of the Company in trust for the Crown, until Parliament should otherwise direct". Thus, for the first time, no definite period was fixed for the continuation of the rule of the Company over India, and it was left entirely to the discretion of the Parliament. Taken along

with the provision for the repayment of the Company's capital, noted above, it may be reasonably concluded that its rule in India would have been normally terminated in 1873, the time of the renewal of the Charter, even if the great Mutiny had not abruptly ended it fifteen years earlier.

In order to facilitate the eventual and inevitable transfer of authority from the Company to the Crown, the stranglehold of the latter was gradually tightened more and more. The Charter Act of 1833 empowered His Britannic Majesty to appoint any person as Commissioner for the affairs of India in addition to the official members mentioned in the Act, and more clearly defined their powers, and any two or more of these Commissioners formed a Board for executing the powers vested in the body, popularly known as the Board of Control. It was enacted that no official communications should be sent to India by the Directors until they had first been approved by the Board of Control. The salary of the President of this Board was increased by the Act of 1853 to the level of that of a Secretary of State. The same Act further laid down that "every appointment by the Court of Directors of any ordinary Member of the Council of India, or of any Member of the Council of any Presidency in India, shall be subject to the approbation of Her Majesty".[6] The Act of 1853 also reduced the number of Directors from 24 to 18, out of whom six were to be appointed by the Crown. Finally, the Act of 1853 took away from the Directors the right of patronage to Indian appointment to which a detailed reference will be made later. This removed one great obstacle to the transfer of the ruling power in India from the Company to the Crown.

It is not an easy matter to decide how the exact position and status of the Company *vis a vis* the Crown were affected by the changes mentioned above. Even before the Act of 1853 was passed, there was a sharp difference of opinion on this point. While some declared that India was being governed by the Board of Control, others maintained that it was still governed by the Company. The truth, as almost always happens, probably lies between the two. There is no doubt that in practice the Board exercised greater authority in the appointments of Governor-General, Governor and the fourth member of the Council which, in theory, were to be made by the Company subject to the approval of the Crown. This is illustrated by the tussle between the two bodies over the appointment of the successor of Lord William Cavendish Bentinck, to which reference has been made above.[7] At the same time the Company was not absolutely helpless in the matter of these appointments. They possessed the power of recalling any office-holder in India. They

threatened to recall Lord Amherst in 1825, and actually recalled Ellenborough in 1844,—in both cases against the declared wishes of the Board of Control.

Thus none of the two bodies could altogether ignore the views or wishes of the other in regard to the selection of high officials. The same was also true, more or less, in formulating a general administrative policy. The Directors of the Company possessed the initiative, while the Board of Control had a "general and absolute restraining power". While the Board had the final power, the Directors had "the liberty to protest, and to expose to public view instances of maladministration". This is by no means a negligible factor in a democratic country like Britain with Parliamentary Government. On the whole, it may be said that the two bodies—the Company acting through the Directors, and the Crown acting through the Board of Control—shared the authority of the Home Government and served as checks and balances against each other. It is, therefore, not easy to answer the question which of these two governed India. But the question itself is, more or less, of merely academic importance. For in practice, it was neither the Board nor the Directors that governed India. India was really ruled by the British Bureaucracy in India that had slowly but steadily grown up since the days of Cornwallis. That this was inevitable, at least to a certain extent, was foreseen by wise and farsighted statesmen. Macaulay, with his usual shrewdness, put the whole thing in his own characteristic way "India", he said, "is and must be governed in India. This is a fundamental law which we did not make, which we cannot alter, and to which we shall do our best to conform our legislation".[8] Confirmation and illustration of this meet us almost at every step as we go through the history of India in the first half of the nineteenth century Nothing, however, demonsrates the truth of Macaulay's dictum in a more remarkable manner than the foreign policy pursued by the Government of India. In spite of a sincere and earnest desire not to extend British dominions in India, the home authorities were unable to restrain the Governors-General whose aggressive designs were formed mostly after their arrival in India and originated at the suggestion or clever manipulation of their official advisers. The Directors had little effective voice in this particular matter, but even the Board, which possessed full authority, could not exercise it on account of distance and consequent delays involved in communication between India and England, before they were connected by telegraphic wire. The Board and the Ministry were often presented with accomplished facts, which they did not think it politic to reverse. Even in instances—and these

were by no means rare—where the Directors as well as the Ministry were convinced of the injustice done to Indian States, or even of crimes perpetrated against individual rulers, they regarded themselves as helpless. Nothing can be a greater indictment against the Government of India than the remarks passed by the Home authorities against the annexation of Căchăr and Sindh, but the latter would not, or could not, reverse the acts of crime of which they reaped the full benefit. Neither the righteous indignation of the Directors in the first case, nor the unanimous condemnation by the British Cabinet in the second, disturbed the placid equanimity of those who knew that India was and must be governed by them. The dogs barked but did not bite, and the caravan passed on.

The same thing holds good even in matters of internal administration. The members of British Parliament, inspired by the liberalism of the nineteenth century, gave expression to noble principles as the basis for ruling India. It was openly proclaimed, and accepted in principle, that the first object of the Government of India should be to provide for the welfare of the Indian population, and next, but ranking far below the first, to promote the interests of Great Britain. It was urged, and seemed to be taken for granted, that there was no conflict between the two.[9] But this was a mere snare and delusion. The Government of India, engaged in the task of day to day administration, knew full well that in many vital points the real interests of India and England were not compatible with each other. So, in giving effect to the policy of Home authorities, they chose to provide for the welfare of India only when, and in so far as, it could be done without any detriment to the real interests of England. Macaulay said in 1833: "We are trying to give a good government to a people to whom we cannot give a free government." How far this idea actuated the authorities at Home it is difficult to say. But even giving them credit for sincerely entertaining such high principles, it is necessary to remember that they had not the requisite power to translate them into action. For it was well-nigh impossible in those days to guide, supervise and control the administration of India from England, save in a very general way. India was thus governed, not in England, but in India, though not *for* India nor *by* India. Real importance therefore attaches not so much to the relation between the Company and the Crown, but to the machinery of Government set up in India by the Charter Acts of 1833 and 1853.

II. THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

The framework of the Government of India, fixed by Pitt's Act of 1784, continued without any substantial modification till 1833.

The act of 1784 maintained the separate autonomous governments for the three Presidencies of Bengal, Madras and Bombay, but extended the control of the Governor-General of Bengal in Council over the other two Presidencies. A further step was taken in the same direction by the Charter Act of 1833.

This Act at first sought to centralise the Government of India. The original Bill provided that the civil and military government of the whole of India would be vested in a Governor-General and Counsellors, and the subordinate Presidencies should be normally administered by Governors only, without a Council, the idea being to appoint a representative of each Presidency to the Governor-General's Council. It was, however, agreed that such an ambitious idea could not be realized in practice, presumably on account of distance and difficulties of communication between the different parts of British dominions in India. But it was not altogether given up and was introduced in a modified form.

By the Charter Act of 1833, the superintendence, direction, and control of the whole civil and military government of the Company's territories in India were vested in a Governor-General and Counsellors to be styled 'the Governor-General of India in Council'. To this Council was added a fourth ordinary member who was not to be a servant of the Company and who was "not to be entitled to sit or vote in the said Council except at meetings thereof for making laws and Regulations". The new member was known as the Law Member.

The Governor-General, together with these four members and the Commander-in-Chief, who continued to be an extraordinary member, formed the Supreme Council for the Government of India whose orders and instructions were binding on the Governors of the other Presidencies. These Presidencies also lost their legislative power which was vested in the Governor-General of India in Council, with additions of certain members, as will be related later.

A further step in developing the unitary character of the Government of India was taken in the Charter of 1833 by establishing a general control of the Governor-General over the finances of India. Hitherto the financial affairs of the three Presidencies of Bengal, Madras and Bombay remained separate. But the Act of 1833 established a general control of the Governor-General over Madras and Bombay. It provided that "no Governor shall have the power of creating any new office, or granting any new salary, gratuity or allowance, without the previous sanction of the Governor-General".

As a result of the Act of 1853, finance became centralised in the hands of the Governor-General in Council. "The whole of the reve-

nues from all the Provinces of British India were treated as belonging to a single fund, expenditure from which could be authorised by the Governor-General in Council alone". The Provincial Governments did not possess powers of taxation or borrowing, except "in respect of local cesses".[9a]

In a vast country like India, such concentration of financial authority produced various evils. The Government of India could not have full and fair knowledge of the varied financial needs and resources of the different provinces. There was competition among the Provinces in making financial demands and local economy was not always thought of. Under such a system, as Richard Strachey says, "the distribution of the public income degenerates into something like a scramble, in which the most violent has the advantage with very little attention to reason. As local economy leads to no local advantage, the stimulus to avoid waste is reduced to a minimum. So, as no local growth of the income leads to an increase of the local means of improvement, the interest in developing the public revenues is also brought down to the lowest level".[10]

By the Act of 1853, the Law Member became a full-fledged member of the Governor-General's Council. None of the other members of the Council were, however, assigned to any special duty or department. "They were supposed to work together as a council at the business of government, and the Company was strongly averse to anything that tended to attack the custom of collective deliberation. The primitive routine of affairs was as follows: The Secretaries sent in circulation, in those mahogany boxes which in India correspond with the red boxes of the English Cabinet, all the papers as they were received. These were supposed to be read by each member in turn. A paper of any moment would probably occasion minutes from several if not from all the members, and unless they all agreed, which was unlikely, back the papers would go in circulation once more, so that each member should see what the others had written about his opinion. This process obviously might go on almost indefinitely, and was indeed a singularly ill-chosen mode of conducting business. Ill-humoured phrases come more readily from the pen than from the lips; and caustic replies are produced more easily at one's own writing-table than impromptu in the course of discussion. All this minuting not only wasted time and paper, but also provoked a frequent tone of bilious acrimony. Twice a week from 10 in the morning to 3 or 4 o'clock in the afternoon the members met in Council. The secretaries attended in turn, each with his mountain of papers, reading them at length, or else giving the abs-

tract endorsed upon them, and hurriedly noting the decisions which the Council took on each.

"Under this system the business of the Council was unending. Three whole days a week, Metcalfe reckoned, did not suffice for reading the papers that came to him in circulation; two whole days were passed in Council; and the remaining week day was not enough for writing minutes and revising despatches. What was worse, when business was brought before the Council in this undigested mass, when an estimate for repairing a barrack-roof might be succeeded by a declaration of war, it is unlikely that the Council's attention would be divided among the cases in due proportion to their real consequence.

"Dalhousie did something to check this flow of ink and waste of time by directing that, where members differed on a case, it should always be brought into Council and discussed before being sent out again in circulation. The natural consequence was that in the great majority of questions members came to an agreement instead of exasperating each other by pen-and-ink misunderstandings."[11]

As a rule the Governor-General's Council had a right to discuss everything concerning the Government, and decide every question by a majority of votes. But they had two limitations to their power since the days of Lord Cornwallis. In the first place, the Act of 1786 empowered the Governor-General in special cases to override the majority of his Council. Secondly, the Charter Act of 1793 authorized him, when absent from his Council, to issue orders which would have the same force "as if made by the Governor-General in Council". This right, originally concerned to meet an emergency, enabled the Governors-General, during their routine tours or pleasure trips to Simla during the hot weather, to take action alone without the advice or even the knowledge of his Council. The prolonged visits of Amherst and Auckland to Simla, while the members of the Council were all in Calcutta, provoked Kaye to declare Simla as "the cradle of more political insanity than any place within the limits of Hindustan".[12]

The Executive Government of each of the Presidencies was vested in the hands of a Governor and three Councillors , the Governor-General in Council being also Governor in Council for Bengal. Curiously enough, it was laid down that the powers and functions of the Governor-General of Fort William in Bengal in Council, and the Governor-General of Fort William in Bengal alone should be vested respectively in the Governor-General of India in Council and to the Governor-General of India alone.[13] This created an extremely anomalous position. The same person in his capacity as Governor

of Bengal, would be subject to the control of himself as Governor-General and his Council. On the other hand, the Governor of Bengal, in his capacity as Governor-General of India, could overrule the Council supposed to rule India. This evil was sought to be remedied by a provision in the Act of 1833[14] by which the Governor-General could appoint an ordinary member of his Council Deputy-Governor of Bengal. In either case the administration of Bengal was likely to suffer, as this big province required the undivided attention of one head. It was therefore provided that the territories included within the Presidency of Fort William were to be divided into two. A new Presidency was created, with its seat at Agra. But this clause was suspended by an Act in 1836 which authorized the appointment of a Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces which comprised most of the territories now included in Uttar Pradesh with the exclusion of Awadh.

By the Charter Act of 1853, Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and Assam became the charge of a Lieutenant-Governor, without a Council, and the Governor-General of India ceased to bear the title, and perform the function, of the Governor of Bengal.

An Act passed in 1854 further empowered the Governor-General of India in Council, with the sanction of the Court of Directors and the Board of Control, to take, by proclamation, under its immediate authority and management, any part of territories for the time being in possession or under the Government of the East India Company, and thereupon to give all necessary orders or directions respecting the administration of that part, or otherwise provide for its administration. On the basis of this provision, the Chief Commissionerships of Assam, the Central Provinces, and Burma were created. This Act also gave authority to the Government of India, with the sanction of the Home Government, to define the limits of the several provinces of India.

III. PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION

A. BENGAL

1. *Jurisdiction*

At the beginning of the period under review, the jurisdiction of the Presidency of Fort William in Bengal extended over Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Varanasi and "the Ceded and Conquered provinces". The last two, as mentioned above, formed a separate province in 1834. It was at first called the Province of Agra and, in 1836, the North-Western Provinces. In February, 1836, the North-Western Provinces, styled the Upper Provinces of Bengal, though still in-

cluded within the Presidency of the Fort William in Bengal, was placed under a Lieutenant-Governor. After the first Burmese War both Arakan and Tenasserim were administered by the Government of Bengal. The Presidency of Bengal, as mentioned above, was administered by the Governor-General as Governor, his office, in his absence, being held, *after 1833, by a Deputy-Governor* appointed from among the members of his Council. On 12 October, 1853, the Court of Directors sanctioned the appointment of a Lieutenant-Governor for Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, and Assam, styled the Lower Provinces of Bengal, and on 28 April, 1854, Mr. F. G. Halliday took charge of this new office.

2. *District Executive authority*

The District formed the chief unit of administration in Bengal, as in the rest of British India, during the period under review and also later on. In 1909 British India contained more than 250 Districts. Though the Districts varied greatly in size and density of population, the average area of a District was then 4,430 sq. miles, and the average population, 931,000.

The District administration in Bengal began to take some shape from the time of Lord Cornwallis. The number of Districts in this province was then sixteen, though it increased later, till Bengal alone contained twenty-eight districts. The Cornwallis Code of 1793 left the Collectors only as executive officers for the collection of revenue, acting in direct subordination to the Board of Revenue at the Presidency, and they were divested of all judicial and magisterial functions. In each District a new Court of Civil judicature was constituted under a European Judge who was also vested with the powers of Magistrate and controlled the police within the limits of his jurisdiction. Thus in each District there was one officer as Judge-Magistrate, and another as Collector. By a permissive Regulation of 1810, the Government was authorized to make a distinct appointment of a Magistrate. Police administration was placed under a Superintendent of Police for the Divisions of Calcutta, Dacca, and Murshidabad, by a Regulation of 1808, and for the Divisions of Patna, Varanasi and Bareilly by a Regulation of 1810. These offices were abolished in 1829, and their duties were transferred to the officers appointed as "Commissioners of Revenue and Circuit", each of whom was placed in charge of a Division embracing several Districts. The Provincial Courts of Appeal were abolished by Lord William Bentinck and their duties also were made over to the Commissioners, who were to go on Circuit as Sessions Judges. On abolition of the Revenue Boards in the Provinces their powers were

transferred to the Commissioners under the control of the Board of Revenue in Calcutta.

Further changes were introduced in 1831. The sessions work of Divisional Commissioners was transferred to the District Civil Judges. The Judges were divested of their magisterial duties which were transferred to the Collectors. Thus the Magistrate and Collector became the executive head of each District. This union of the two offices was, however, temporary. In 1837, during the administration of Lord Auckland, the offices of Magistrate and Collector were again separated. By 1845, the joint offices survived only in three Districts of Orissa and in the independent Joint-Magistracies of Patna, Maldah, Bogra, Noakhali, Faridpur, Bankura, Barasat, and Champaran.

But within a few years prominent British officers considered the reunion of the offices of Magistrate and Collector necessary for efficiency of District administration. It was advocated strongly by Sir F.J. Halliday, Lord Dalhousie and Lord Canning. Lord Canning recorded in a Minute, dated 18 February, 1857, that "the concentration of all responsibility upon one officer cannot fail to keep his attention alive, and to stimulate his energy in every department to the utmost, whilst it will preclude the growth of those obstructions to good government which are apt to spring up where two coordinate officers divide the authority". Lord Stanley, then Secretary of State for India, approved of the Governor-General's suggestion in a Despatch, dated 14th April, 1859, and the offices of Magistrate and Collector were combined in the same person. The arguments of J.P. Grant against the union of the two offices were recorded by him to be "fallacious". At the same time seven of the eight "independent" Joint Magistracies were made full Magistracies and Collectorates. There was, however, a strong volume of public opinion against the union of the offices of Magistrate and Collector.[15]

The post of uncovenanted Deputy-Collector was created by Regulation IX of 1833, and that of Deputy-Magistrate, "with or without police powers", in 1843. Persons of any "religion, place of birth, descent or colour" might be appointed to these posts. The way was thus opened for the appointment of Indians to higher and more responsible administrative posts which were hitherto practically closed to them. To provide more efficient assistance to the Magistrate-Collectors than could be afforded to them by mere assistants, covenanted or uncovenanted, Lord William Bentinck created a class of officers, called Joint Magistrate, usually recruited from senior covenanted officers. Subsequently, as the Sub-division system

grew up under the pressure of circumstances, Joint Magistrates were posted to Sub-divisions with the title of Sub-divisional Officers.

3. *The Judiciary*

Reference has been made in the preceding volume to the system of judicial administration established by Lord Cornwallis in the year 1793. Certain changes were introduced during the following years. Two Provincial Courts of Appeal were added to the existing four, one for the province of Varanasi and the other for the Ceded Provinces. The constitution of the Sadar Diwani Adalat was radically changed. Instead of Governor-General and members of the Supreme Council, it comprised, in 1801, of three Judges to be selected from the covenanted servants of the Company, and in 1811, of a Chief Judge and as many Puisne Judges as the Governor-General in Council should think necessary. In 1831 a Sadar Diwani Adalat was constituted for the North-Western Provinces with similar powers. Regulations passed in 1814 and 1821 modified and extended the powers and functions of the judges of lower grade known as *Sadar Amins* and *Munsiffs*.

As measures of relief for the lower courts special commissions were established for administering justice in the new portions of the province, and the number of *Zilla* (District) Judges was raised. Some judicial functions were re-entrusted to the revenue officers by Regulation XIV of 1824.

A reorganisation of the judicial system was effected by Regulation V of 1831 during the Governor-Generalship of Lord William Bentinck with a view to the "gradual introduction of respectable Natives into the more important Trusts connected with the administration of the country."[16]

By this and subsequent Regulations the District Judges were invested with the duties of the Sessions Judges, but were relieved of their magisterial functions which were transferred to the Collectors and some newly created officers. Regulation VIII of 1833 permitted the appointment of additional Judges, who might discharge the duties of the Judges of the Districts to which they were attached. The *Sadar Amins* and *Munsiffs* were invested with power to try suits of the value, respectively, of Rs 1,000 and 300, and Registrar's Courts were abolished. Bentinck also created a new grade of Indian Judgeship filled by officers called Principal *Sadar Amins* with power to try original suits up to a value of Rs. 5,000. Their jurisdiction was afterwards extended over cases involving property of any value, and from their decisions appeals lay to the European Judges and sometimes directly to the Sadar Diwani Adalat of Calcutta. In 1869 they

were transformed into Subordinate Judges under District and Sessions Judges. From the decisions of the Civil Judge in original suits appeals lay to the Sadar Diwani Adalat, which ceased to enjoy any original jurisdiction and became the court of final appeal in the Bengal Presidency. From the decision of the Sadar Diwani Adalat an appeal lay to the Privy Council in England in all suits of which the value was £1000 and upwards. To facilitate Government revenue collection, rent and revenue cases were again transferred to the Collectors in 1831, and the offices of Collector and Magistrate were united, as mentioned above.

B. MADRAS

By 1803 Madras Presidency had a territory of a hundred and forty thousand square miles.[17] There have been few subsequent changes in the territorial jurisdiction of the Presidency. A bit from Coorg was added to Canara in 1834, but a portion of Canara was transferred to Bombay in 1862. The Company had obtained suzerainty over the Sundur State in 1818, and the tributary State of Kurnool was annexed in 1839.

The Government of the Presidency consisted of the Governor and a Council of three. Later, after 1833, the number of civilian councillors was reduced to two, but the local Commander-in-Chief was added to the Council. In 1786 a Board of Trade and a Board of Revenue were established, each consisting of three members, a member of the Council being the President. The Board of Trade was in charge of the commercial affairs of the East India Company, but it was abolished in 1825. The Board of Revenue exercised general supervision over revenue matters. By Regulation IV of 1804 it became a Court of Wards for the Presidency and controlled religious and other endowments for many years.

The Presidency was divided into Districts, the number of which varied from twenty to twenty-six, each District being again subdivided into a number of *Taluks*. The Magistrate and Collector was the chief executive head of the District from 1787. As in Bengal, he possessed enormous powers and had multifarious duties relating to revenue and taxes, police, jails, and, later, of Municipalities and District Boards. He had a "large summary jurisdiction in everything connected with the rent and with the possession of landed property". "The magistrate and collector is then", wrote Campbell in 1853, "a sort of local Governor, and has a great advantage in his management from the combination of powers. He exercises an extended superintendence over his district, a good deal beyond the mere duties which his simple name implies, and the people look to

him as their immediate ruler".[18] In his capacity as revenue-collector he was subordinate to the Board, which could receive appeals against some of his orders, executive and judicial. The Collectors were given covenanted Assistants from 1792, and later on one or more deputies or assistants were generally stationed at different centres in subordinate charge of portions of the District, consisting of a number of *Taluks*, in which they exercised most of the powers possessed by the Collectors. All these executive officers were English. Each *Taluk* was under an Indian *Tahsildar*, assisted by a deputy or a *naib-Tahsildar*. No steps were taken to appoint Indians to the higher executive posts until Act 1 of 1857 authorized the appointment of Deputy-Collectors, who occupied a position similar to that of covenanted divisional officers.[19]

The jurisdiction of the Supreme Court, established in 1801, was confined to the town of Madras. The administration of justice for the rest of the Province was conducted under the system introduced in 1802-6 and modified by the Regulation of 1816. There was a Sadar Court consisting originally of the Governor in Council, and later of a body of judges presided over by a member of Council. For civil justice this court was called 'Sadar Adalat' and for criminal justice it was known as 'Sadar Fauzdari Adalat'. From the Sadar Court an appeal in suits of the value of rupees 45,000 or more lay to the Governor-General in Council. The constitution of the Sadar Court was changed in 1806 and new judges were appointed. In 1807 the Governor was "declared to be no longer a judge".

Below the Sadar Court, there were four Provincial Courts which dealt with most of the civil appeals and with suits involving an amount above Rs. 5000. These tribunals, as Courts of Circuit, tried also more important criminal cases. In the District, District Judge was the principal judge in civil and criminal cases and was assisted by Registrars or Assistant Judges. The presiding officers in the above courts were European covenanted servants of the Company. Below these came three classes of Indian judges, namely, *Sadar Amins* with the jurisdiction over suits up to Rs. 300, district *munsiffs* with competence to try cases up to Rs. 200, and village headmen or *munsiffs* who could try and decide suits not exceeding in value Rs. 10, or with the consent of the parties, Rs. 100. Both the district and village *munsiffs* were authorized to summon, on demand, village *panchayats* (bodies of arbitrators) which had unlimited jurisdiction in cases which might be referred to them. Native agencies were still further increased by the appointment of native civil and criminal courts in certain areas having concurrent jurisdiction with the District Judge. These native judges were known as Principal *Sadar Amins* after 1836. A modified

form of the English jury system was introduced in 1827 into the Courts of Circuit. The offices of the Judge and Magistrate were separated by the legislation of 1816.[20]

The judicial organization was modified in 1843. The Provincial Courts of Appeal were abolished. New District Courts were established and the jurisdiction of the Subordinate Judges and Principal *Sadar Amins* was extended so as to include all suits of less value than 10,000 Rupees. Such courts were given jurisdiction over Europeans, Americans and Indians, and an appeal from them lay to the District Courts. The Madras Courts of Circuit for criminal justice were abolished in 1845 and the judges of the District Courts were authorized to "hold permanent sessions for trial of persons accused of crimes formerly triable by Courts of Circuit".

C. BOMBAY

The beginning of the nineteenth century witnessed quick territorial expansion of the Bombay Presidency, and it took its future shape between 1805 and 1827. In addition to the territories ceded by the Peshwa, the Sindhia, and the Gaekwar before 1818, the Company obtained, on the extinction of the Peshwaship in that year, an extensive territory including certain parts of Gujarāt, the whole of the Western Deccan (except the portion left with the Raja of Sātārā and the two *parganas* given to the ruler of Kolhāpur), the whole of Khāndesh, and the District of Dhārwār including Belgaum, Ratnagiri and Kolaba There was further expansion of the Presidency between 1818 and 1858 by the lapse of two Native States, namely, Mandvi (in Surāt) and Sātārā, and the conquest of Sindh (1843). In 1848 the Bijāpur District, included in the territory of the Raja of Sātārā, lapsed to the Company, and in 1861 the Sindhia finally transferred to it the Panch Mahals. Aden was added in 1838.

The territorial expansion of the Bombay Presidency necessitated the extension of the administrative system. The newly acquired territories were divided into Districts, whose administration followed generally the lines adopted in Bengal. The Bombay system, however, differed from the Bengal system in two respects: there was no Board of Revenue in the former, and the size of the Districts was made smaller than that of the Bengal District. The country which under the Maratha administration had been in charge of many *Mamlatdars* and *Kamavisdars* with very unequal extent of territory and power was placed under five principal officers, such as the Collectors of Khāndesh, Poona, Ahmadnagar and the Carnatic, and the Political Agent at Sātārā. The straggling revenue divisions of the Maratha days were formed into compact Districts, each yielding

from 50,000 to 70,000 Rupees a year and placed under a *Mamlatdar*. A *Mamlatdar's* duties were to superintend the collection of revenue, to manage the police and to receive civil and criminal complaints. He was to refer the civil cases to the *Panchayats* and the criminal cases to the Collectors. He was assisted by a *Sheristadar* or record-keeper, an accountant, and some clerks. The pay of a *Mamlatdar* was from Rs. 70 to 150 a month, and that of a *Sheristadar* from Rs. 30 to 50. Below the *Mamlatdar* was the *Patel*, who, along with the *Kulkarni*, was required to look after revenue and police administration of a village.

As regards civil administration in other parts, it may be noted that in 1812-13, the territories of the Bombay Government in Gujarāt included the towns of Broach, Kaira and Surāt. In each of these towns was stationed an officer, who combined the functions of Criminal Judge and Magistrate, having an assistant for magisterial functions. By 1828-29 the system of combining magisterial and judicial functions in one office was abolished, and the Collector of the District was entrusted with magisterial functions including control of the police. At that time Gujarāt was divided into four Collectorates, viz., one comprehending Ahmadabad and Kaira and the other comprehending Surāt and Broach. The magisterial power of the Collector extended to sentences of fine, simple imprisonment for a period not exceeding two months, flogging not exceeding 30 stripes, and personal restraint. The Indian District police officers and the village police officers had limited powers of punishment in trivial cases.

The Districts in the Deccan in 1828-29 were divided into three Collectorates, viz. Poona, including Sholapur, Ahmadnagar and Khandesh, and into two Judgeships, one comprehending Poona with Sholapur, and the other comprehending Ahmadnagar and Khāndesh. The Collectors were the Magistrates with control of the Police of their respective Districts and of the Police of the Sadar Stations. The penal jurisdiction of the Magistrates was similar to that in the province of Gujarāt, and the Indian Police officers in the Districts and the villages had also powers similar to those possessed by such officers in Gujarāt.

As regards the fiscal duties of the Collectors of land revenue, it has to be noted that "independently of the responsible and minute nature of the revenue settlements", they were "invested with the civil cognizance, in the first instance, of all claims for the possession of lands, of all disputes in regard to the tenure of lands, of all disputes regarding rent, of the current or former years, which the ryots on the one hand, or the farmer or superior landlord on the other, may desire to submit to adjudication; of all questions regarding the use of

wells, tanks and water-courses, and roads and fields; and of disputes regarding boundaries".[21] In each case one could make an appeal to the District Judge against the Collector's decree.

Besides the Police, the other specialised administrative Departments were those of the sea-customs, education, jails in charge of an Inspector-General of Prisons from 1855, the Public Works and the Ecclesiastical and Medical Departments.

The administration of Dhārwār and Belgaum Districts was conducted by the officers of the Madras Presidency on different lines till 1830. The Collector, with the help of some assistants and a Registrar, performed all the civil and criminal duties, which in other areas were discharged by the separate departments of District Judge, Criminal Judge and Magistrate. After the permanent assignment of the District of Dhārwār, including Belgaum, to Bombay in 1830, the Bombay Regulations were formally applied there. Even then "the offices of the political agent, collector, judge and sessions judge were still united in one individual, while the assistant judge at Dharwar was vested with the powers of an assistant at detached stations (e.g. Dhulia) in other parts of the presidency".[22]

The main features of the District administration in Bombay followed the general pattern Ordinarily each Collectorate of District contained eight to twelve *Taluks* or sub-divisions, each of which consisted of 100 to 200 government villages, that is, the villages the whole revenues of which belonged to the State. The village officers were the *Patel*, the *Kulkarni* or *Talati*, the *Mahr* and the watchman.

Each *Taluk* or sub-division of a District was placed in charge of a *Mamlatdar*, whose duties in respect of revenue affairs and other matters of local administration in his area were varied and heavy. Above the *Mamlatdar* was the Assistant or Deputy-Collector, usually in charge of three or four *Taluks* for revenue and other administrative purposes. He was to travel in his *Taluks* for seven months in the year. Above the Deputy-Collector, and in charge of the entire District, was the District Collector and Magistrate. He had to tour in his jurisdiction for at least four months of the year. Besides looking after revenue matters and magisterial works of his District, he was required to supervise the stamp revenue and administer the excise and other special taxes. He was the Visitor of the District Jail, *ex-officio* District Registrar, and had to perform various other important duties as in Bengal and Madras.

Arrangements made for the administration of Sindh in 1847 were different in certain respects from those in the rest of the Bombay Presidency. The Commissioner in Sindh was the chief execu-

tive head of the local administration in all its branches. Three Collectorates were established at Karachi, Hyderabad and Shikarpur, and two small independent revenue charges, called the North-Western Frontier and the Nagar Parkar District, were created. The Collectors in Sindh were invested with magisterial powers like the Collectors in other parts, but, unlike the latter, they presided also over the administration of justice in the civil and criminal courts. To assist the Collectors, Deputy-Collectors were appointed in the different sub-divisions of a Collectorate. The North-Western Frontier Districts were placed under a Political Superintendent, who was also military commandant, helped by an Assistant Superintendent, having powers and duties similar to those of a Deputy-Collector in other districts. The Thar and Parkar District was administered until 1856 by the Assistant Political Agent in Cutch and, later on, by an officer corresponding to the Collector.[23]

A system of judicial administration, based on that of Bengal, had been introduced in Bombay by Regulations of 1799. But modifications were made in 1827 under Mountstuart Elphinstone. The modified scheme set up District Courts for civil and criminal justice, from whose decisions appeals lay to the Sadar Diwani Adalat and the Sadar Faujdari Adalat in civil and criminal cases, respectively. The former consisted of four Judges, a Registrar, and an Assistant Registrar, while the latter was composed of the Junior member of Council as Chief Judge and three Puisne Judges. The Court of Circuit, held by one of the Faujdari Adalat Judges, retained cognizance of the most heinous crimes. A special court was established for trying political offences. It consisted of three Judges selected from those of the Sadar Diwani Adalat and the District Courts. But in 1841 an Act was passed providing that crimes against the State should be tried in ordinary courts. The Provincial Court of Appeal was abolished in 1830, and the Judges of Criminal Courts were given the powers of Sessions Judges and Courts of Circuit. Joint Sessions Judges were appointed in 1845.

D. NORTH-WESTERN PROVINCES

It has been already noted that the North-Western Provinces, comprising the districts ceded to the Company in 1775 and 1801 by the Nawabs of Avadh, the "Conquered Territories" surrendered to the Company by the vanquished Maratha chief, the Sindhia, in 1803, the northern hill districts gained by the Company as a result of their victory in the Nepal War (1814-1816), and the Sagar and Narbada districts,[24] surrendered to the Company by the Bhonsle Raja of Nāgpur in 1818 after the Third Anglo-Maratha War, was, in 1836,

made an administrative unit, separate from that of Bengal under a Lieutenant-Governor. Nāgpur and Jhansi, annexed by Dalhousie, were also attached to the North-Western Provinces.

The system of administration established by Cornwallis, and what was known as the Bengal Regulations, were extended to the "Ceded Territories" in 1803 and to the "Conquered Territories" and the Bundelkhand Districts of Banda and Hamirpur in 1805. These areas, known as the Upper Provinces, remained under the direct control of the Governor-General and subject to the jurisdiction of the Calcutta Courts. No major alterations were made until the period from 1829-1835, when changes, similar to those effected in Bengal administration by Lord William Bentinck, were introduced. The police system, established by Lord Cornwallis in Bengal in 1793, was also extended to the Upper Provinces where, however, the landholders continued to have local responsibility for maintenance of law and order. In the Non-Regulation Districts of this region, as in the Non-Regulation Districts elsewhere, the District Officer, called the Deputy-Commissioner, combined in his hands all powers—executive, magisterial and judicial. The Commissioner of the Division was, however, the appellate authority in all branches of administration.

E. THE PANJĀB

The Panjāb offers a good example of the change-over from the native to the British administrative system, clearly illustrating the merits and defects of both.

Ranjit Singh had established a strong and benevolent autocracy over the extensive dominions which were conquered by his arms and welded into a compact kingdom. There were no written laws, but "private property in land, the relative rights of land-holders and cultivators, the corporate capacities of village communities, were all recognised". Private arbitration under the direction of the local authorities was the general rule, though appeals were heard by the King, either in his capital or during his constant tours throughout his dominions. The land tax varied from two-fifths to one-third of the gross produce and was paid in kind. Remoter districts, particularly the areas inhabited by fierce mountaineers in N.W. F.P., were placed under military governors for the collection of revenues and maintenance of peace. Peshāwār and Hazāra Districts, for example, were ruled with iron hands, respectively, by Generals Avitable and Hari Singh. In the Districts nearer Lahore Kardars or agents collected revenue under the final supervision of the ministry.[25]

After the British annexation of the Panjāb its administration was entrusted to a Board of three, including the two Lawrence brothers, John and Henry. The two brothers differed fundamentally in their policy and outlook, as mentioned above.[26] Henry Lawrence, had imbibed a respect for the Sikh laws and customs and had a tender sentiment for the fallen *Sardars* (nobles). John was far different, and wanted to remove all intermediaries between the cultivators and the Government. Thus while Henry wanted to recognize the Sikh *Sardars* as the aristrocracy of the country, John considered them as "nuisances and enemies". Henry belonged to that school of British politicians which was fast passing away under the new imperialism of Auckland and Dalhousie—a school which, in the words of Innes, "gave special consideration to the feelings, traditions and modes of thought of the Native community, demanded a fair recognition of the claims of Native States, and urged the need for wise and generous treatment of the natural leaders of people".[27] As mentioned above, both the brothers resigned, and Dalhousie accepted the resignation of Henry "in a letter insultingly disingenuous".[28]

John Lawrence, an imperialist to the core, carried out to the letter the new spirit that swayed the Dalhousie school, namely that India should be directly administered by her alien rulers, as all intervening chiefs and leaders were an obstruction to good administration and a hindrance to reforms. So the Panjāb rapidly fell in line with the other British provinces, and the old traditions of the system, set up by Ranjit Singh, vanished like a dream in less than ten years' time.

It is unnecessary, therefore, to treat in detail the administrative system of the Panjāb beyond observing that the Board of three was abolished in 1853 and its power was vested in a Chief Commissioner, with a Judicial Commissioner and a Financial Commissioner under him. John Lawrence became the Chief Commissioner of the Province.

IV. RECRUITMENT OF SERVICES

As has been noted above, India was ruled, not so much by the Directors of the East India Company or the British Crown, as by the Governor-General acting with the help and advice of the high officials in the covenanted Civil Service. The method of appointing the Governor-General has been mentioned above. In order to understand the real nature of the Government of India it is necessary to give a comprehensive account of the system of recruiting the covenanted Civil Service of the Company. For it is the high executive officials that largely determined the nature and character of the Government. As Macaulay observed, in his own characteristic

manner, "even the character of the Governor-General was less important than the character and spirit of the servants by whom the administration of India was carried on".[29]

In the early days of the East India Company, the senior and junior merchants, factors and "writers", performed commercial as well as administrative duties. The Court of Directors selected the candidates on their own request or petition. It was ordered in 1731 that "in future all petitions for employments in the Company's service, either at home or abroad, be presented by some gentlemen in the Direction". Thus began the system of patronage which the Court of Directors claimed to be one of their important privileges. Patronage inevitably led to favouritism, for the Directors naturally preferred their own friends and relations to suitable candidates. "The Service became practically the monopoly of certain families".

The system had serious defects, and corruptions of various kinds prevailed among the Company's servants. The efforts of Clive to check these proved unsuccessful. Warren Hastings created highly paid posts, which enhanced the cost of administration, but did in no way help to remove corruption or increase efficiency. It was Lord Cornwallis who for the first time took steps in this direction. The Charter Act of 1793 provided that "all vacancies happening in any of the offices, places or employments in the civil line of the Company's service in India should, subject to certain specified restrictions, be filled from among the Company's civil servants". The civil servants were required to sign a covenant not to receive presents or to carry on private trade. Provision was made to reserve for them superior grades and offices and for payment of liberal salaries.

But there were two defects in the system of Lord Cornwallis. In the first place, his distrust of the Indians and almost complete Europeanisation of the services enhanced the cost of administration and also caused much disappointment among the Indians. Secondly, by merely seeking to remove corruptions he could not secure efficiency, for which proper staff with due training was required. It was felt necessary in 1790 to give to the Company's servants training in Indian languages and the "writers" were informed that the Governor-General would not be inattentive to the progress which they made in acquiring the native languages.

The Governor-Generalship of Lord Wellesley was an important landmark in the history of the British Civil Service in India. An imperialist to the tip of his fingers, Lord Wellesley was of the view that the Indians could not be allowed to share legislative and executive authority of the Governor-General. But he wanted that steps should be taken for providing duly qualified persons for conducting

administration in India, and believed that "the same general qualifications necessary for the first political, judicial, financial and commercial stations in Europe, are equally requisite for the due discharge of the duties of similar situations in India".[30] Wellesley felt that the education of the civil servants "must be of a mixed nature, its foundations must be judiciously laid in England, and the superstructure systematically completed in India". So he founded the Fort William College in Calcutta on 24 November, 1800, where the civil servants of the Company were to receive training in the literature, science and languages of India. This institution continued as a language school for Bengal Civil Servants till 1854. In 1806 the Company established the "East India College" at Haileybury for two years' training of the young officers nominated for service in the East.

In spite of considerable improvement, the system of nomination, as it was in vogue in 1818, suffered from two inherent defects. In the first place, the nominated young men were not always well-qualified, and certainly not always the most suitable candidates available. Secondly, it gave a great patronage to the Directors of the Company which was a source of corruption of public morals. Besides, it was well-known that this vast patronage enjoyed by the Directors would lead them to oppose any scheme of improving Indian administration, such as the transfer of authority to the Crown, to which many looked forward as the ultimate solution. During the Parliamentary debate on the Charter of 1833, the question was discussed by Macaulay and others, and the principle of competition in appointing the "Writers" was adopted. The actual procedure of selecting candidates was laid down in Sections 103 and 105. Every year the Board of Control, in consultation with the Court of Directors, would decide upon the number of admissions into the Haileybury College, which should not exceed the number of probable vacancies during the year. The Directors would then be called upon to nominate candidates for admission, whose number should not be less than four times the number of actual admissions as already decided upon. These nominated candidates, who should not be less than 17 or more than 20 years of age, would then be subjected to an examination prescribed by the Board of Control and the requisite number would be selected, strictly in order of merit, for admission into the College. The selected candidates, after three years' studies in the Haileybury College, were to be re-examined and then appointed as Government servants of the Company.

After the passing of the Charter Act of 1833, a Committee was appointed in 1834 under the Chairmanship of Macaulay to consider

the arrangements for introduction of the competitive system. The Committee drew up a list of subjects for examination, and recommended twenty-three as the maximum and eighteen as the minimum age for admission to the competitive examination. Macaulay's Committee also recommended the discontinuance of the College at Haileybury, "which was not considered to provide arrangements suitable to the age and standing of those likely to be selected as candidates at the open competition".

As could be expected, the Directors were strongly opposed to the whole scheme and it was adopted in the House of Commons mainly through the persuasive eloquence of Macaulay. Unfortunately, Macaulay left for India soon after to take up his new office of Law Member, and Lord Ellenborough, who succeeded Charles Grant as the President of the Board of Control, "regarded the new scheme as clumsy, and the method of selection by examination as suspect". The Directors had therefore no difficulty in getting through the Parliament an Amending Bill postponing the execution of the scheme. This was a doubtful victory for the Directors. For, twenty years later their patronage altogether ceased.

When, in 1853, the question of the renewal of the Company's Charter was under consideration, Sir Charles Wood, President of the Board of Control, proposed the introduction of open competition for recruitment to services as "a great experiment which would justify itself by securing intellectual superiority while affording as good a chance as then existed of obtaining in successful candidates those qualities which no examination can test".[31] This proposal was strongly supported by Macaulay and it received the sanction of the Parliament. Thus it was provided that "admission to Haileybury and to the covenanted civil service should be open to all natural-born subjects of Her Majesty, whether European, Indian, or men of mixed race, who could establish their claim by success in competitive examinations held in England under regulations framed by the Board of Control". An Act of 1855 prohibited the admission of further students to Haileybury College after January 25, 1856, and directed the College to be closed on January 31, 1858.

It would appear from what has been said above, that the Charter Act of 1833 also sought to remove colour bar in the matter of appointments. Clause 87 laid down that "no Native of the said territories, nor natural-born subject of His Majesty resident therein, shall, by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent, colour or any of them, be disabled from holding any place, office, or employment under the said Company". In his speech on the Charter Act

of 1833 (10th July, 1833) Macaulay referred to this provision as "that wise, that benevolent, that noble clause".

There was strong opposition to which Macaulay made a spirited reply. "We are told that the time can never come when the natives of India can be admitted to high civil and military office. We are told that this is the condition on which we hold power. We are told that we are bound to confer on our subjects—every benefit which they are capable of enjoying;—no—which it is in our power to confer on them;—no—but which we can confer on them without hazard to our own domination. Against that proposition I solemnly protest as inconsistent alike with sound policy and sound morality..." Macaulay added: "To the last day of my life, I shall be proud of having been one of those who assisted in the framing of the Bill which contains that clause".[32]

Such speeches, echoing across the seas the voice of British liberalism, had a profound effect on India. Perhaps no other clause of the Charter Act of 1833 so deeply stirred the imagination of the Indians and stimulated their faith in the sense of justice of the British people. It roused high hopes in the minds of the young English-educated Indians, and several of them proceeded to England to qualify themselves for holding high offices in India. But on their return they were doomed to disappointment. As pointed out by Mr. Cameron, a member of the Council of the Governor-General and Chairman of the Indian Law Commission, "during the twenty years that have since elapsed (the passing of the Act of 1833) not one of the natives has been appointed to any office except such as they were eligible before the Statute".[33] As noted above, this provoked the Indians to offer a strenuous opposition to any further renewal of the Charter of the East India Company.

But hopes did not die. For three quarters of a century the politically minded Indians looked upon the clause 87 of the Charter Act of 1833 as the Magna Carta which would secure for them a due share in the administration of their own country. Unfortunately, neither this clause, nor the assurance, to the same effect, held out in the famous Proclamation of Queen Victoria in 1858, did materially change the policy of keeping the civil service of the Company as a close preserve of the British. What was worse still, attempts were made, from time to time, to explain away the significance of the clauses. Immediately after the Act of 1833 was passed, the Court of Directors limited the application of the clause to the appointments made in British India and held that "it does not break down or derange the scheme of our government as conducted principally through the instrumentality of our regular servants".[34] There is,

however, no warrant for such a restricted interpretation of the clause. An eminent British historian of modern times has thought fit to support the view of the Directors. Referring to the particular clause, quoted above, he says: "Clearly this did not mean, and was not designed to mean, that all offices were in future to be thrown open indiscriminately to Indians. The Clause of the Act of 1739 declaring that none but covenanted servants of the Company could hold any civil office carrying over £ 800 a year salary still remained law"[35] This objection can hardly be taken seriously, for it would appear to any unprejudiced critic that the plain words of the clause could not mean anything else than the admission of the Indians into this rank of covenanted servants. The Queen's Proclamation, as we shall see, was similarly sought to be explained away by Lord Curzon.

The plain fact seems to be that such liberal concessions were never intended to be carried into practice, and the Indians looked upon the attempts to explain them away as merely adding insult to injury. The semblance of an effort to give effect to the clause 87 of the Act of 1833 was made by the creation of the post of Deputy-Collector in 1833 and that of Deputy-Magistrate in 1843. Persons of any religion, colour, descent, or place of birth could be appointed to those posts—the highest to which an Indian could aspire.

V. LEGISLATION AND JUSTICE

1. *The Legislative Authority*

The dim beginnings of the establishment of a Central Legislature, separate from the Executive, may be traced to the Act of 1833 which, as noted above, added to the Governor-General's Council a fourth ordinary member, the Law Member, for legislative purposes only. He was not to be recruited from the Company's civil or military service, and had the right of speech and vote only at meetings of the Council for the consideration of legislative business. The Company, however, felt and advised that the Law Member should be present also at the executive meetings of the Council. "An intimate knowledge", it wrote, "of what passes in Council will be of essential service to him in the discharge of his legislative functions. Unless he is in the habit of constant communication and entire confidence with his colleagues; unless he is familiar with the details of internal administration, with the grounds on which the Government acts and with the information by which it is guided, he cannot possibly sustain his part on the legislative conferences or measures, with the knowledge, readiness and independence essential to a due perfor-manance of his duty".[36] The advice of the Company was acted upon.

Thomas Babington Macaulay, who was appointed the first Law Member, and his successors attended all the meetings of the Council.

The Charter Act of 1833 did something more than merely appoint a Law Member. By this Act the Governments of Madras and Bombay were deprived of their power of legislation. Henceforth these Governments were merely authorized to 'propose drafts of new laws, with the reason for proposing them, to the Governor-General in Council, and this body was required to take the same into consideration and to communicate its resolutions thereon to the Government which had proposed them'.[37] The Governor-General in Council was empowered to make laws, to repeal, amend, or alter "any laws or regulations whatever now in force or hereafter to be in force" in the territories of the East India Company or any part thereof, and "to make laws and regulations for all persons whether *British or Native, foreigners or others*, and for all Courts of Justice, whether established by His Majesty's Charters or otherwise, and the jurisdictions thereof, and for all places and things whatsoever within and throughout the whole and every part of the said territories, and for all servants of the said Company within the dominions of Princes and States in alliance with the said Company". But the Governor-General in Council was not authorized to make laws and regulations (1) "which shall in any way repeal, vary, suspend, or affect any of the provisions" of the Act of 1833 or "any of the provisions of the Acts for punishing mutiny and desertion of officers and soldiers" in the service of the Crown or of the Company; (2) which shall in any way affect the constitution or rights of the Company, the Prerogative of the Crown or the authority of Parliament, or any part of the unwritten laws or constitutions of the United Kingdom, whereon may depend in any degree the allegiance of any person to the Crown of the United Kingdom or the sovereignty or dominion of the Crown over the Indian territories; (3) without the previous sanction of the Court of Directors. . .whereby power shall be given to any Courts of Justice other than the Courts of Justice established by His Majesty's Charters, to sentence to the punishment of death any of His Majesty's natural-born subjects born in Europe, or the children of such subjects; (4) which shall abolish any of the Courts of Justice established by His Majesty's Charters.[38]

The rights of Parliament were not, however, curtailed in any way. The Act "expressly declared that a full, complete, and constantly existing right and power is intended to be reserved to Parliament to control, supersede, or prevent all proceedings and acts whatsoever of the said Governor-General in Council, and to repeal and alter at any time any law or regulation whatsoever made

by the said Governor-General in Council, and in all respects to legislate for the said territories and all the inhabitants thereof in as full and ample a manner as if this Act had not been passed; and the better to enable Parliament to exercise at all times such right and power, all laws and regulations made by the said Governor-General in Council shall be transmitted to England and laid before both Houses of Parliament, in the same manner as is now by law provided concerning the rules and regulations made by the several governments in India".[39] The Court of Directors had the right to veto any laws or regulations passed by the Governor-General in Council.[40] But subject to these limitations, all the Acts passed by the Governor-General in Council were to possess the same force and effect as any Act of British Parliament and shall be taken notice of by all Courts of Justice whatsoever within the said territories... and it shall not be necessary to register or publish them in any Court of Justice.[41]

This was further emphasized by the fact that laws made under the powers given by this Act were known as Acts, and took the place of the Regulations made by the Governments in India under previous Acts of Parliament. The most important effect of these provisions of the Act of 1833 was to bring the Supreme Courts under the jurisdiction of the Governor-General in Council. Before this Act, no Regulation was binding on these Courts until and unless it was 'registered' by them, and such registration was wholly at the discretion of these Courts themselves. The result was that the legislation of the Governor-General of Bengal in Council or the Governors of Madras and Bombay in Council was not normally binding on the Indian residents of the Presidency towns and the European residents in or outside them. Now the legislation of the Governor-General of India in Council became binding on all persons and all courts of law. Further, the Council was authorized to modify or define the jurisdiction of any of the Courts established by His Majesty's Charter, although these could not be abolished without the previous sanction of the Court of Directors.

Some alterations were made in the machinery for legislation by the Act of 1853. The Law Member of the Governor-General's Council was made a full-fledged member, and this Council was enlarged for legislative purposes by the addition of six members, called the legislative members. Thus for legislative purposes this Council was to consist of twelve members,—the Governor-General, the Commander-in-Chief, the four ordinary members of the Governor-General's Council, the Chief Justice of Bengal, a Puisne Judge, and four officials (paid) of the local Governments of Bengal, Madras, Bombay

and Agra (North-Western Provinces). The Governor-General, as President, possessed the power of veto. The sittings of the Legislative Council became public and its proceedings were officially published. Discussions became oral instead of being conducted in writing, and the Bills were placed for examination before a Select Committee instead of a single member. For the first time the principle of local representation in the Indian Legislature was recognized, and legislation treated as a special function of Government requiring special machinery and special processess.[42]

But the local representation was more nominal than real. In the first place, one member each from Bombay and Madras was regarded as insufficient, and these Presidencies complained of the preponderance of authority which Bengal exercised. Secondly, representatives were all officials. No Indian was included in the first Indian Legislative Council, though Lord Dalhousie pleaded for it. Already he had written a masterly essay entitled *"The Government of India,"* dated 12th October, 1852. On 21 March, 1853, he wrote a letter to Sir Charles Wood, President of the Board of Control, suggesting in it the inclusion in the Legislative Council of some 'Native Gentlemen' from unofficial as well as official ranks. He significantly observed: "Indeed amidst the general unfitness there are already some native gentlemen whose intellectual qualities, whose experience of our Government, and whose extensive and minute knowledge of Indian details, would render any one of them a very valuable member of the Legislative Council. For my part, I should be personally glad to see such a gentleman appointed at once under the new Act". An attempt was made in the Committee stage of the Bill in the House of Commons to introduce non-official elements—both Indian and European—in the Council. But it was defeated by the opposition of Sir Charles Wood, who maintained that no two Indians could be found to represent adequately the diversity of Hindu and Muslim society.

Along with the expansion of the Legislative Council the Act of 1853 considerably enlarged the legislative authority of the Governor-General. Under the Act of 1833 the Governor-General could overrule the decisions of the Majority of his Council, only when it met as an Executive Body. But when the Council met for legislative purposes, he had only a casting vote. Under the Act of 1853 he could veto any law passed by the Council, a power which hitherto belonged to the home authorities alone. But in spite of this power of veto the Governor-General did not find it an easy matter to control the legislature, though composed entirely of officials, and keep it confined to its proper functions. In the first place, it was invested

with forms and modes of procedure closely imitating those of the House of Commons. There were, for example, 136 standing orders to regulate the proceedings of an assembly of twelve persons Secondly, contrary to the intentions of the Parliament, the Legislative Council began to assume the character of a miniature representative assembly, assembled for the purpose of inquiry into, and redress of, grievances. It "evinced an inconvenient tendency to interfere with the Executive"[43] and even went so far as to present "an address asking that certain correspondence between the Secretary of State and the Government of India should be communicated to it." The situation had become strained, and justified Sir Charles Wood's complaint in the House of Commons that, contrary to the intention of its founders, the Council had become a sort of debating society or petty Parliament. He quoted the Chief Justice of Calcutta as saying that the Council "has no jurisdiction in the nature of that of a grand inquest of the nation. Its functions are purely legislative, and are limited even in that respect. It is not an Anglo-Indian House of Commons for the redress of grievances, to refuse supplies, and so forth."[44] It was, however, pointed out by the Governor-General that the Council always kept itself within strict letters of the law. Wood was neither the first nor the last to discover that the letters of an Act do not always conform to its intentions.

2. *Laws and Law-courts*

The division of jurisdiction between the King's courts and the Company's courts was gradually felt to be an anomaly in the British administrative system in India. There was also a growing feeling in favour of systematic codification in place of varying laws and usages. Cowell writes that at "that date there were five different bodies of Statute law in force in the (Indian) empire. First, there was the whole body of English Statute law existing in 1726 so far as it was applicable, which was introduced by the Charter of George I and which applied, at least, in the Presidency towns. Secondly, all English Acts subsequent to that date, which were expressly extended to any part of India. Thirdly, the Regulations of the Governor-General's Council, which commenced with the Revised Code of 1793, containing forty-eight Regulations, all passed on the same day (which embraced the results of twelve years' antecedent legislation), and were continued down to the year 1834. They only had force in the territories of Bengal. Fourthly, the Regulations of the Madras Council, which spread over the period of thirty-two years, viz. from 1802 to 1834, and were in force in the Presidency of Fort St. George. Fifthly, the Regulations of the Bombay Code, which began with the Revised Code of Mountstuart Elphinstone in

1827, comprising the results of twenty-eight years' previous legislation, and were also continued till 1834, having force and validity in the Presidency of Fort St. David".[46]

The Charter Act of 1833, which gave extensive powers of legislation to the Governor-General of India in Council, as noted above, also emphasized the necessity of a comprehensive consolidation and codification of the varieties of laws. Section 53 of the Act declared that it was "expedient that subject to such special arrangements as local circumstances may require, a general system of judicial establishments and police, to which all persons whatsoever, as well as Europeans as natives, may be subject, should be established in the territories subject to the Company at an early period; and that such laws as might be applicable in common to all classes of the inhabitants of the said territories, due regard being had to the rights, feelings and peculiar usages of the people, should be enacted, and that all laws and customs having the force of law within the same territories should be ascertained and consolidated, and, as occasion may require, amended". In order to carry this into effect the Act directed the Governor-General in Council to appoint a commission, to be known as the 'Indian Law Commission', which was to "fully inquire into the jurisdiction, powers, and rules of the existing Courts of Justice and police establishments in the Indian territories, and all existing forms of judicial procedure, and into the nature and operation of all law, whether civil or criminal, written or customary, prevailing and in force in any part of the Indian territories, to which any inhabitants of those territories whether Europeans or others were then subject". This was the first Indian Law Commission with Macaulay as its most prominent member. As a result of the labours of this Commission, a draft of a Penal Code was prepared before Macaulay's departure from India in 1837.

In spite of all the changes mentioned above, racial distinction regarding criminal charges against "European British subjects"[46] was maintained. Until 1836 they were under the control of the Supreme Courts alone both for civil and criminal matters. This prevented proper administration of justice, for "the procedure in the Supreme Court was very slow, and the expenses very great". Justice rendered according to English law was costly enough in England, but it was ten times more so in India. In Calcutta the ministerial officers attached to the Supreme Court made scandalous fortunes.Natives in the *mofussil* were deterred by the expense of litigation before these tribunals with the result that Englishmen might, without danger, refuse to pay their debts.[47] The state of things was thus described by Macaulay: "Till the passing of Act XI

of 1836 an Englishman at Agra or Benaras who owed a small debt to a native, who had beaten a native, who had come with a body of bludgeon-man and ploughed up a native's land, if sued by the injured party for damages, was able to drag that party before the Supreme Court of Calcutta (a distance perhaps of 1000 miles), a court which in one most important point—the character of the judges—stands as high as any court can stand, but which in every other respect I believe to be the worst in India, the most dilatory and the most ruinously expensive. The expenses of litigation in England are so heavy that people sit down quietly under wrongs and submit to losses rather than go to law, and yet the English are the richest people in the world. The people of India are poor, and the expenses of litigation in the Supreme Court are five times as great as the expenses of litigation at Westminster. An undefended cause which might be prosecuted successfully in the Court of King's Bench for about £8 cannot be prosecuted in the Supreme Court under £40. Officers of the Court are enabled to accumulate in a few years, out of the substance of ruined suitors, fortunes larger than the oldest and most distinguished servant of the Company can expect to carry home after thirty or forty years of eminent service. I speak of Bengal, where the system is now in full operation. At Madras, the Supreme Court has, I believe, fulfilled its mission. It has done its work. It has beggared every rich native within its jurisdiction, and is inactive for want of somebody to ruin".[48]

Macaulay's effort to bring the "European British subject" under the full jurisdiction of the courts of the Company in civil and criminal matters was foiled by violent opposition of the Europeans in Calcutta. But he succeeded in doing something by Act XI of 1836, commonly known as Macaulay's Black Act. It placed Englishmen under the jurisdiction of the Company's courts in civil matters, and distinctions of race were abolished in civil courts throughout India.[49] As could be expected, the European community denounced this Act. What is less easy to explain is that Dwarakanath Tagore joined them.[50]

But the British settlers in India continued to enjoy the right to be tried in the Supreme Courts in criminal cases for another generation. "Innumerable instances are on record which show", observed a writer in the *Calcutta Review* of 1846, "how lamentably this indulgence has been abused, and how frequently British Europeans, after the commission of outrages, which at Calcutta or at home would have been visited with the most condign punishment, have baffled the most strenuous efforts of justice. The only remedy at present is a prosecution in the Supreme Court, to which as it is not

in the power of poor people living at the distance of several leagues to resort, there is no real redress for wrongs; consequently, that salutary influence which the presence of neighbouring and competent authority cannot fail to exert over a community is unfelt by British European subjects. Unrestrained in their actions,—with large sums at their command,—contaminated by daily intercourse with depraved natives, and forgetful of their God, they had been known to equal the worst Zemindars in cruelty and oppression. False charges, connivance at perjury, even subornation of perjury,—affrays—unnecessary disputes—have been as things of everyday occurrence with them".[51]

An attempt was made in 1849 to stop this glaring iniquity. A Bill was drafted by Mr. Bethune, the Law Member of the Government of India, in order to abolish exemption of the British-born subjects from the jurisdiction of the Magistrates and the criminal courts established by the East India Company. This and three other Bills, proposed at the same time, were intended to bring British-born subjects under the jurisdiction of the Company's criminal courts, and thereby protect the people, living outside the Presidency towns, against molestation by non-official Europeans, who were, till then, subject only to the Supreme Court in Calcutta. As expected, the European community started a violent agitation against these Bills, which they denounced as Black Acts, and made representations to the British Parliament against them. The Indians made a counter-agitation and Ramgopal Ghosh published a pamphlet[51a] embodying Indian views. But the Indian counter-protest was of no avail, and the Bills were withdrawn from the Legislative Council. This gave a rude shock to the educated Indian public and alienated the Indians from the British to a degree unknown before.[51b]

The Indians, however, continued the agitation, and on 6 April, 1857, "a monster meeting was held in the Town Hall on the Black Acts". In addition to eminent Indian leaders of Calcutta, the meeting was addressed by George Thompson, a liberal-minded Englishman who heartily sympathized with the political aspirations of the Indians. They all pleaded strongly for the abolition of special privileges enjoyed by the British-born subjects of Her Majejsty in India which were a great source of misery to the Indians. But all the agitations were unheeded by the authorities, until, in September, 1861, "the Legislature made a sort of compromise. The special privileges of the British-born subjects were abolished, but they could not be tried by any officer of Indian birth. Under this law even an Indian Magistrate or Judge, holding a covenanted post, could not try the humblest individual claiming a British birth. This anomaly,

which became more and more glaring as Indian members of the Civil Service grew in number and came to occupy senior executive and judicial posts, had far-reaching consequences, as will be seen later.

3. *Administration of Criminal Justice.*

An anonymous writer, presumably an Englishman, published a long article in the *Calcutta Review* in 1846, reviewing the administration of criminal justice in Bengal.[52] A contemporary view of British administration, not by disaffected Indians, but by a well-wisher of the empire, naturally carries some weight when it is directed against his own countrymen. It is therefore of some interest to note the defects to which he drew pointed attention.

1. The general insecurity resulting from the new system of police and administration of criminal justice introduced by Lord Cornwallis is described in all its horrid details. But it showed no signs of decrease. "The exertions of the Magistrates had been either opposed, or but feebly backed by their ill-paid and necessarily corrupt native subordinates...The report of the Superintendent of Police, indeed, mentions that for the last two or three years dacoity has been on the increase and the conviction of the dacoits on the decrease. This is not as it should be Of what use would it be to put down other crimes, when that which is most common, most dreaded and most systematic, goes on increasing year after year?" Among the various probable causes to which it may be attributed the writer mentions (a) uniting the offices of Collector and Magistrate, and (b) appointment of young Civilians, fresh from college, to posts once filled by able and experienced officers.[53]

2. Evils of the legal system:

(a) Want of a complete set of laws; (b) The frequent change of Regulations; (c) The number of appeals to which a Magistrate's orders are subject and the faulty manner of appellate decisions; (d) Nice distinctions of power between various officials "such as are not recognized in any civilized country and which are alike wrong in principle and injurious in practice". This is illustrated by the powers vested in a Magistrate, a Deputy-Magistrate and an Assistant Magistrate.

3. No provision is made for the punishment of British European felons in the *mofussil*, enabling them to oppress the natives with very little risk of punishment and to set the police at defiance.[54]

4. "The next grand evil in our system of administering criminal justice is the union of the offices of Ministerial and Judicial

Magistrate, of thief-catcher and thief-trier. There is scarcely any principle in jurisprudence more important than the separation of these two offices. Their union is injurious to offenders, to the community, and to the Magistrates,—injurious to the offenders, because they are not tried by an unbiassed judge,—but by one whose interest it is to convict them,—who will gain credit if they are convicted; —whose opinion has been formed before the trial by a previous knowledge of the circumstances of the case, whose judgment has been influenced by collateral circumstances,—who has himself been advising the police officers how to conduct the case,—who unites in himself the offices of accuser, judge and jury".[56]

The 'following extract from a minute written by Mr. Halliday about eight years ago' is quoted in support of the above accusation.

"The union of Magistrate with Collector has been stigmatized as incompatible, but the junction of thief-catcher with judge is surely more anomalous in theory and more mischievous in practice. So long as it lasts, the public confidence in our criminal trials must always be liable to injury and the authority of justice itself must often be abused and misapplied. For this evil which arises from a constant and unavoidable bias against all supposed offenders, the power of appeal is not a sufficient remedy; ... It is well known on the other hand that the judicial labours of the Magistrate occupy nearly all his time; that which is devoted to matters srictly executive, belonging to the short space daily employed in hearing Thannah reports. But the effectual management of even a small police force and the duties of a public prosecutor ought to occupy the whole of one man's time, and the management of the police of a large district must necessarily be inefficient which from press of other duties is slurred over in two hasty hours of each day" [56]

5. Low scale of remuneration paid to the officers, particularly Darogas and Deputy-Magistrates. " ..Deputy-Magistrates, who were authorized by the local authorities to draw 400 Rupees and to look up to five and six hundred a month as a stimulant to their zeal, will in future be allowed only 200, with the prospect of getting 350 Rupees, when they show themselves qualified for independent jurisdictions. The pay normally allowable to a Daroga has been reduced to 50 Rupees" [57]

6. The large extent of the country under the jurisdiction of a Magistrate, and the extreme inequalities and irregularities in the division of the whole province into Districts and *Thannahs*. A Magistrate cannot keep in touch with the rural population and exercise effective supervision over his subordinates. The long distances which a plaintiff or a witness, living at the borders, has to travel

make them unwilling to attend the Magistrate's court, and it was not unusual "to seize and send them to the Magistrate's kutchery" under charge of Burkandazes, and while there to keep them under restraint and sometimes in confinement.[68] "There can be no doubt that these hardships have facilitated the escape of many offenders. The reluctance of prosecutors is generally so very great that an experienced officer remarked, that there are very few persons, who, having once gone through a criminal proceeding, would ever feel inclined to complain again".[69]

7. The defective method of taking down depositions. "A Mohurrir, receiving a salary of ten or twelve Rupees per month, generally takes down the depositions of all witnesses, and examines all prosecutors and defendants. His movements are not subjected to very strict supervision. He proceeds with his work, while the Magistrate is attending to other duties. He is without control. He writes down "no", when the witness says "yes", and "yes", when the witness says "no", as often as it suits his purpose. He is invariably leagued with one party or other. If he is against the prosecutor, he does not arrange the plaint in a proper way, but makes out a confused account, with as many contradictions as he can conveniently introduce;—if he is for the plaintiff, he makes the plaint a masterpiece of eloquence, squeezes in every possible argument, words it classically, and places, in strong lights, all those points, which he from experience knows, will *tell* with his superior. He arranges the defence and the evidence on the same principle...He sometimes abandons his desk with a plausible pretence, goes out, settles terms, comes to an understanding, and consults his favourite *muktear* as to the best means of carrying into effect his evil designs. He directs witnesses for the party with whom he is leagued what to answer, when cross-examined by the Magistrate, and endeavours to mislead the other party's people. He is frequently successful, and seldom exposed...We may safely assert, that in eight cases out of ten, decided in every Magistrate's court, douceur is paid to the Mohurrir that takes down depositions.

An appeal to the Sessions Judge, by the party who has paid the bribe, will compel the Magistrate to send up the papers of the case to that officer,—and as the latter has no means of judging of its merits, but by the documents submitted, and as those documents are expressly prepared to favour the party appealing, the decision is generally for him.[60]

8. The practice of judging the efficiency of Magistrates, and the state of Districts, from the proportion between acquittals and convictions.

9. "The most unlimited powers were placed in the hands of the Darogah by the Magistrate to put the bad characters in confinement on mere suspicion. Thus the Darogah might confine whomsoever he liked without any check or control." Its abuses are thus described: "It breaks down all distinctions between honest men and thieves. It puts them on a level. The honest man has as many chances of going into jail, if he quarrels with the Darogah, as the thief. The Darogah has but to report to the Magistrate, that his enemy is a bad character, and to send a few perjurers to prove that he does not stay at home at night, effectually to crush his spirit, to put him to jail as a felon, to blast his character, to make him a marked man for life, and to triumph as the victor...It drives also the discharged thief to despair. He may resolve to become virtuous, honest, and industrious and yet be put to jail at the whim of the Darogah. .This summary power of confining native Budmashes appears doubly odious, when contrasted with the license allowed to European bad characters. An English Indigo Planter may have caused a dozen affrays, each attended with homicide, have escaped by some petty technicality of the law, and yet live in much more security and freedom, than the most honest native subject".[61]

10. The practice of convicting prisoners on their own confessions. "If statistical returns were to be examined, we would find, that in England or France, scarcely four prisoners in a hundred, and in India more than seventy in the same number, are convicted on their own evidence". This is not because, as one might suppose, "the Asiatics are superior to Europeans in the most Christian virtue of repentance". But the confessions are the result, in most cases, of ill treatment or promise of pardon. The writer of the article, who claims "to be somewhat more behind the curtain than a mere stranger", illustrates as follows the *modus operandi* of extorting confessions.

"When a Darogah goes into the interior to apprehend felons, he sometimes takes with him two or three noted bad characters of the neighbourhood By the offer of large rewards to these wretches, he induces them to endeavour to scent out the perpetrators of the crime, which is the immediate object of his inquiries. If his spies are successful, he singles out those who are suspected of the offence, takes them one by one into a room, and there either commences a series of violent assaults, or offers them pardon, in order to induce confession. He promises also rewards of money, and says to every fellow in his turn, that if he confesses and criminates the others, he will not only be excused, but lauded to the skies, and blessed with a competence He draws out two different pictures, and places them both at their disposal to select from. First, he speaks of confession, pardon, rewards, praise, happiness,—then, of obstinacy, silence, the jail, the lash, family disgraced—wife forced into the gaze of the public and maltreated—children in destitution, starving for food. No wonder if the deluded victim prefers the former to the latter!

"If, however, his emissaries fail, he carves out a different line of conduct. Not being able to suspect any one, he selects some innocent person from the adjoining village, takes him into a solitary room, and there continues beating him till he roars for mercy,—and when he is thus in a fair way to accede to any conditions, he is told that the only way of avoiding flagellation, disgrace, and infamy, is to say before the Magistrate, that he and several others did commit the crime with which they stood charged. If he refuses, the flagellation is renewed with redoubled vigour, and kept up till his consent is obtained. But few, simple, untutored hearts can resist the temptation of choosing rewards and freedom, in preference to disgrace and punishment, although at the sacrifice of truth and honesty. Many, accordingly, at the very first offer, accede to the Darogah's terms. The result is, that one guiltless person accuses others equally innocent as himself, and, with the active co-operation of the Darogah, who weaves around all a dense tissue of circumstantial falsehood, gets himself, as well as his victims, sent to jail". The following footnote is added to the above, presumably by the Editor. "Although the Darogah appears the chief villain in this drama, he may plead some palliations to his guilt. It must be remembered, that his perwannah usually directs him to apprehend the delinquents in a week, on penalty of dismissal and imprisonment. What is done, may, therefore, be alleged to be done only in self-defence. To protect himself, he is, it may be said, instigated to ruin others".[62] A concrete instance is cited in which ". .in the hope of obtaining rewards offered by a Darogah, two poor and innocent persons came foward before the Magistrate, and confessed being guilty of murder, and they were saved from the jaws of death at the very moment their fate seemed inevitable, by the opportune arrival of an order from the Nizamat Adalat which proved that they were imprisoned in the civil jail when the murder was committed! We could now, if it were necessary, adduce three or four instances of a similar nature,—several, in which confessions have been extorted by maltreatment,—and very many of those elicited by promises never mulfilled"[63]

11. Want of honest informers regularly paid by Government.

"The unpaid minions of the Darogah, who act at present as informers, are the dregs of jails. They form the most degraded and unprincipled portion of society. They are worse than the village Chowkidars. They receive no regular pay from Government, but earn a wretched subsistence by *levying hush money from offenders, or compounding cases against honest people*. Their object is not to further the ends of justice but to fill their own pockets. They seldom direct their attention to cases which are not likely to yield them pecuniary profit, but bring into action all their energies to investigate those which are likely to enrich them. While they "profess to enforce, they frustrate the law". Most of the felons who escape, escape through their agency. Most of the innocent who are punished are their victims. They are the medium of corruption between the Darogah and the village communities. Through them principally bribes are given, and taken. But although they are such reprobate and incorrigible rogues, they are indispensable. Without them no Police officer can ferret out offenders. A new Deputy-Magistrate or Darogah who sees through their villainies, and scruples to avail himself of their assistance, may get into discredit with his superiors He is branded as an inefficient officer".[64]

In conclusion the writer points out that the British Government is immeasurably superior to all its predecessors (i.e. Hindu and Muslim Governments), and then adds: "But the same sense of justice, which compels us to admit, unhesitatingly, the superiority of the English Government over those that preceded it, necessitates

us in the spirit of candour and impartiality, to point out defects, and to confess that all its measures have neither been judicious nor effectual. It has achieved much, when compared with other foreign rulers, but little, when compared with what perhaps it might have done, and at all events ought unceasingly to aspire to do. It is not an isolated regulation, or a solitary enactment that can benefit the millions who inhabit this country. To abolish one inhuman practice,—to disseminate the seeds of enlightenment among a few, is, as the Hindu poets say, to cast a drop of milk on the mighty ocean in order to turn it sweet. The mass of the people must be educated. The whole system must be altered. The crumbling edifice must be demolished from turret to foundation stone, and a new and more compact one raised in its stead. This of course must be the work of time. What we plead for is an acceleration of the progress towards its realization. In all its amplitude, such a consummation cannot possibly be ensured without the co-operation of the people".[65]

Long extracts have been quoted from a contemporary review because the criticism accurately reflects the general opinion of the Indians. That there is a great deal of truth behind it is confirmed by such evidence as we possess. As will be seen later, some of the defects pointed out were wholly or partially remedied during the latter half of the nineteenth century, but some of the evils continued down to the end of the British period. The picture of administration that emerges out of the review is a rude reminder that the security of life and property and an efficient system of administration based on the rule of law, which are regarded as the chief blessings of British rule in India, had not been established, or at least been largely absent, at the end of the first century of British rule in India.

VI. REVENUE AND FINANCE

A. REVENUE

1. *Land-tax.*

The land-tax formed the principal item of revenue of the Government of India. It amounted to more than half the gross revenue and showed a steady regular increase as the following figures would show.[66]

1817-18 £ 12, 363, 634
1827-28 £ 13, 754, 703
1837-38 £ 11, 853, 975.
1847-48 £ 14, 437, 254.
1857-58 £ 15, 317, 911.

2. *Other sources*

The sources of revenue other than land-tax may be classified as follows.

a. *Opium*

"Opium was grown in British territory,—Benares and Patna, —and in the Native State of Malwa. The Benares and Patna opium was the monopoly of the Company, and the Government of Bengal got a large revenue from this monopoly, selling the opium at a profit of more than 200 per cent. Malwa opium paid a heavy transit duty of £ 12. 10 s. the chest on passing into British territory for exportation, and the Government of Bombay derived a substantial revenue from this transit duty. The two kinds of opium met in the market of Canton for sale in China".[67]

Revenue was also derived from opium consumed in India. This was credited under the head 'excise.' Between 1794 and 1838 opium revenue increased to more than two million sterling. The Government monopoly of opium was objected to by the people as it excluded the Indians from a profitable industry. Forcible introduction of opium into China against the wishes of that country was also objected to on moral grounds.

b. *Salt*

"The Government realised a large revenue from salt manufactured in the Company's territory, and a heavy duty on salt manufactured in Native States and coming into British territory. The Company had the monopoly in salt as in opium".[68]

"Salt was prepared in Bengal by the Company's agents, and a duty of 5s. per Maund (82 lbs.) was added to the cost of production before the article was placed in the market. A duty of 4s. per Maund was raised on salt obtained from mines in the Punjab; while salt prepared in Native States had to pay a duty of 4s. or 5s. before it passed into British territory.

"Madras salt was formed by solar evaporation on the margin of the sea, and was cheaper than Bengal salt; and the Company derived a considerable revenue by selling it at 2s. the Maund. In Bombay the Government permitted manufacturers to remove the salt from the pans on payment of a duty of 1s. 6d. the Maund. Salt imported into India from England or other countries paid a duty of 5s. or 6s. the Maund, so that the importers might not undersell the duty-paying Indian salt.

"The net revenue of the Company derived from salt manufacture rose from £ 800,000 in 1793 to nearly £ 1,300,000 in 1844.

The total quantity of salt manufactured by the East India Company in these fifty-two years is estimated at a little over two hundred million Maunds; and the total revenue derived from the manufacture at sixty millions sterling".[69]

Salt was regularly imported from England, and though theoretically a countervailing import duty was imposed on British salt, in practice the duty was lower than what it should have been, with the result that the import of the British salt went up by leaps and bounds from 352,835 *maunds* in 1846-7 to 1,850,762 *maunds* in 1851-2 in Calcutta. The price of salt, arbitrarily fixed by the Government, was very high and hit very hard the poorer classes. Petitions poured in from every province, the most pathetic being from the cultivators of Bombay in 1852. "The petitioners urged that the produce of their fields supplied them with food enough for eight months in the year; that during the remaining four months they subsisted on vegetables, which they seasoned with chillies, and salt when the latter was free from duty; but when it was made subject to duty, they were obliged to forego even this poor comfort".[70] To the evils of the high price were added those of corruption and extortions. Frederick Halliday, then Secretary to the Government of India in the Home Department, observed:

> "The present price of the Government manufactured salt in Bengal is very much raised to the consumer in the market by the necessary want of economy, not to say extravagances, connected with the Government system of manufacture, and by those many peculations, and extortions, and corruptions, which are inevitable in such a system, and carried on with such instruments. It has seemed almost certain under those circumstances to persons informed upon the subject, that if the Government were to withdraw, and if there were no duty imposed, and the whole were left perfectly free, the native manufacturers in Bengal would forthwith completely and entirely undersell the imported salt, and there would not be a grain of salt imported into Bengal".[71]

The petitions, memorials and agitation against the Salt Tax bore no fruit. The salt revenue was not given up.

c. *The direct taxes levied for purpose of revenue*

(i) The stamp-revenue, realized from stamps affixed on judicial and commercial paper

(ii) The excise-revenue derived from duties on spirits and intoxicating liquors, drugs, hemp, and opium consumed in India.

d. *Duties levied on articles imported into India.*

Various Acts were passed from time to time between 1833 and 1853 by the Indian Legislature to regulate Trade and Navigation and to fix the Tariff. The duties which were levied in 1852 on some

of the principal articles imported into India are shown in the following table.[72]

Articles.	Import Duty
Books, British	Free.
Books, Foreign	3 per cent.
Coffee	7½ per cent.
Cotton and silk piece goods, British	5 per cent.
Cotton and silk piece goods, Foreign	10 per cent.
Cotton thread, twist, and yarn, British	3½ per cent.
Cotton thread, twist, and yarn, Foreign	7 per cent.
Horses and other animals	Free.
Marine stores, British	5 per cent.
Marine stores, Foreign	10 per cent.
Metals, British	5 per cent.
Metals, Foreign	10 per cent.
Beer, ale, and similar fermented liquors	5 per cent.
Salt	5s. per maund (82 lbs.) in Bengal, 6s. per maund in Madras.
Spirits	3s. per Imperial Gallon, London proof.
Tea	10 per cent.
Wines and liquors	2s. per Imperial Gallon.
Woollens, British	5 per cent.
Woollens, Foreign	10 per cent.
Manufactured articles	5 per cent .
Articles not named	3½ per cent.

e. Other taxes of a miscellaneous character.

One of the most oppressive and harassing taxes was the one known as Mutarfa, "a tax upon trades and occupations, embracing weavers, carpenters, all workers in metals, all salesmen, whether possessing shops which are also taxed separately, or vending by the road side, etc., some paying impost on their tools, others for permission to sell extending to the most trifling articles of trade and the cheapest tools the mechanic can employ, the cost of which is frequently exceeded six times by the Mutarfa, under which the use of them is permitted."[73]

If the tax was bad in principle, the methods adopted for its realization were still worse. The Madras Native Association stated in their petition to the House of Commons (1853): "The discretionary power under which it is collected affords a wide field for the perpetual practice of liquisitorial visits, extortion and oppression, as suits the pleasure or the cupidity of the irresponsible collectors, with whom it is no unusual thing to resort to imprisonment and fetters in order to compel their exactions".[74]

Mr. J. W. B. Dykes, who was a Magistrate and himself collected the tax, describes its incidence as follows in his evidence before the House of Commons: "It is levied upon every one almost who does not cultivate land........If an old woman takes vegetables to market and sells them at the corner of the street, she is assessed for selling vegetables. If a man is a cloth merchant, he is assessed. But no tax is levied upon European traders. Perhaps, next door to this man who is making a few rupees a year, there is a European trader making hundreds, but he pays nothing."[75]

The tax was gradually abolished and in 1853 it was in force only in Madras. As a result of the Parliamentary enquiry in that year the tax was abolished in Madras also.

B. FINANCE

The characteristic feature of the financial administration of the Government of India was the almost chronic deficit. The situation was considerably improved by reform and retrenchments effected by Lord William Bentinck[76] for which he had to incur great unpopularity among the British officers in India. Sir Charles Metcalfe kept up the tradition and maintained the surplus. But the imperialist policy of Auckland leading to the Afghan War entirely changed the situation. He arrived in India in 1838 and for the next ten years (1838-9 to 1848-9) India lost her surplus and showed a deficit. The annexation of the rich province of the Panjāb and the war indemnities paid by the Sikhs created a surplus in 1849-50. But the state of things lasted for only three years. Dalhousie's imperial policy was mainly responsible for the deficit which set in in 1852-3 and continued throughout his administration, in spite of his extensive annexations. The treasures of Avadh, acquired in 1856, helped to wipe away the deficit in 1856-7, but the Mutiny of 1857 raised the deficit to ten millions in 1857-8.

The following table shows the steady increase of both expenditure and revenue.[77]

	Gross expenditure	*Gross revenue*
1817-8	£18,046,194	£18,375,820
1827-8	£24,053,837	£22,863,263
1837-8	£19,857,970	£20,858,820
1847-8	£26,746,474	£24,908,302
1856-7	£31,608,875	£31,691,015
1857-58	£41,240,571	£31,706,776

Leaving aside the abnormally heavy expenditure caused by the Mutiny in 1857-8, there was a steady increase of expenditure, at higher rate than the corresponding increase in revenue.

There can be hardly any doubt that the heavy expenditure was mainly due, first to the top-heavy administration run almost exclusively by highly paid British officials, and secondly, to the wars fought for the imperial interest of Britain at the expense of India. As has been shown above,[78] Indian interests, apart from those of her British masters, were not in the least involved in the two costly wars in Burma and one in Afghānistān, whose entire expenses were thrown on the finance of India.[79]

The growth of Indian debt was also partly due to the British imperial policy of expansion in India. In other words, India had to pay the expenses of her conquest by Britain.

"The total Indian Debt, bearing interest, was little over 7 millions in 1792, and had risen to 10 millions in 1799. Then followed Lord Wellesley's wars, and the Indian Debt rose to 21 millions in 1805, and stood at 27 millions in 1807. It remained almost stationary at this figure for many years, but had risen to 30 millions in 1829, the year after Lord William Bentinck's arrival in India. That able and careful administrator was the only Governor-General under the East India Company who made a substantial reduction in the Public Debt of India, and on the 30th April, 1836, the Indian Debt was £26,947,434.

"This was the "Registered Debt". Besides this, there were Treasury Notes and Deposits, making the total "Indian Debt", £29,832,299. Add to this the "Home Bond Debt", and the total Debt of India on April 30, 1836, was £33,355,536".[80] The subsequent increase in public debt is shown in the following table:[81]

1837-8	£33,772,718
1847-8	£48,757,213
1857-8	£69,473,484

The iniquity of making Indian exchequer pay the cost of the foreign wars was exposed in the British House of Commons by liberal-minded British politicians like John Bright, who said: "Last year I referred to the enormous expense of the Afghan War—about 15 millions sterling—the whole of which ought to have been thrown on the taxation of the people of England, because it was a war commanded by the English Cabinet, for objects supposed to be English".[82] Even the East India Company entered an emphatic protest against paying the expenses of the Afghan War. It is interesting to note that while the East India Company received no payments for the service of Indian troops outside India (China, Afghānistān), they had to bear the expenses of British troops sent out from England to suppress the Mutiny.

One aspect of the normal expenditure of India requires special notice. It is the heavy amount annually remitted to England in payment of the expenditure incurred in that country on behalf of India. Such expenditure included (1) the interest payable on Indian debt; (2) interest on railways; and (3) civil and military charges i.e. "all the expenses incurred in England down to the maintenance of the India office and the wages of the charwoman employed to clean the rooms at Whitehall".

The origin of Indian debt has been discussed above, and the interest on railway did not really amount to much during the period under review. It would be discussed later when it grew to enormous proportions during the next half a century.

As regards the third item, India was treated on an entirely different footing from the British Colonies. This was forcibly pointed out by Major Wingate in the following words:

"The entire cost of the Colonial Office, or, in other words, of the Home Government of all British colonies and dependencies except India, as well as of their military and naval expense, is defrayed from the revenues of the United Kingdom; and it seems to be a natural inference that similar charges should be borne by this country in the case of India. But what is the fact? Not a shilling from the revenues of Britain has ever been expended on the military defence of our Indian Empire.

"The worst, however, is not yet told; for it would appear that when extra regiments are despatched to India, as happened during the late disturbances there, the pay of such troops for six months previous to sailing is charged against the Indian Revenues, and recovered as a debt due by the Government of India to the British army pay-office".[83]

John Bright also publicly expressed his view that "the 40 millions which the revolt will cost" should be paid out of the taxes levied upon the people of this country.

Taking the figures for the last 20 normal years before the East India Company lost its dominions in India (i.e. from 1837-8 to 1856-7), it would appear that the total of the Gross Revenue, the Gross Expenditure, and the amount remitted to England were, in round numbers, respectively, 507, 519, and 57 millions. In other words, but for the Home Charges, as the third item is popularly known, there would be a surplus instead of deficit in Indian finances. It may also be seen that nearly one-tenth of the total expenditure for the Government of India was incurred in England, and annually paid out of Indian revenues to a foreign country. "The money flowed out of the country never to return again; it went from a poor country to fructify the trades and industries of a rich country".[84]

"The question of the 'drain' of Indian wealth was discussed for the first time (in India) in the periodical Press by the Serampore Missionaries, who from a perusal of Tucker's *'Review of India'* and other books and papers, came to the conclusion that "the sum annually derived (by Britain) from India through dividends of Indian stock, the industry of such of her sons as are enabled from year to year to return with a competence and through various other ways amounts to full three millions sterling." To those three millions they added another three millions derived as profits of commerce. Rammohan (Raja Rammohan Roy) corroborated the statement of the missionaries by referring to the evidence of Messrs. Lloyd and Melville before the Select Committee of the House of Lords (1830) and to a work entitled. *On Colonial Policy as applicable to the Government of India* by a 'Servant of the Company'. He quoted from the latter work the observation that "the aggregate of tribute, public and private, so withdrawn from India from 1765 to 1820 (is calculated) at 110,000,000".

"With a view to checking such a huge drain of Indian wealth he (Rammohan) suggested that the Europeans accumulating capital in India should be encouraged to settle in India so that the wealth might not go out of the country".84a

The effect of this annual economic drain has been thus described by Major Wingate, a distinguished British Officer in India, to whom reference has been made above:

"The tribute paid to Great Britain is by far the most objectionable feature in our existing policy. Taxes spent in the country from which they are raised are totally different in their effects from taxes raised in one country and spent in another. In the former case, the taxes collected from the population at large are paid away to the portion of the population engaged in the service of Government, through whose expenditure they are again returned to the industrial classes. They occasion different distribution, but no loss of national income....But the case is wholly different when the taxes are not spent in the country from which they are raised. In this case they constitute no mere transfer of a portion of the national income from one set of citizens to another, but an absolute loss and extinction of the whole amount withdrawn from the taxed country. As regards its effects on national production, the whole amount might as well be thrown into the sea."85

Another Englishman, Montgomery Martin, wrote in 1838:

"The annual drain of £ 3,000,000 on British India amounted in thirty years, at 12 per cent. (the usual Indian rate) compound interest to the enormous sum of £ 723,997,917 sterling; or, at a low rate, as £ 2,000,000 for fifty years, to £ 8,400,000,000 sterling! So constant and accumulating a drain even on England would soon impoverish her; how severe then must be its effects on India, where the wages of a labourer is from twopence to threepence a day? For half a century we have gone on draining from two to three and sometimes four million pounds sterling a year from India, which has been remitted to Great Britain...I do not think it possible for human ingenuity to avert entirely the evil effects of a continued drain of three or four million pounds a year from a distant country like India, and which is never returned to it in any shape".86

Different, and sometimes directly contradictory, views have been held by eminent writers on the justice, wisdom, and expediency of the Home Charges. These will be discussed later. But there cannot be much doubt about its general effect described above.

VII. LAND SETTLEMENT

A. NORTH-WESTERN PROVINCES

Reference has been made above[67] to the various experiments made by the British rulers about the assessment and collection of land-revenue leading to the Permanent Settlement in Bengal. It has also been shown how the early enthusiasm, which looked upon this measure as the panacea for all evils, rapidly cooled down and the authorities were loth to extend its operation to new areas. A striking instance of the change of policy is furnished by the "Ceded" and "Conquered Territories" which later constituted the N.W. Provinces. The Government of Bengal, of which it formed a part, promised in 1803 and 1805 to introduce Permanent Settlement in these territories, subject to the sanction of the home authorities. The Court of Directors refused to give the necessary sanction, as a Board of Commissioners, appointed in 1807, opposed the immediate conclusion of a Permanent Settlement.

The system of periodical settlements for short terms continued, with deplorable consequences. The State-revenue amounted to the entire net assets of land after deducting a small allowance for the cost of collection. There was no proper enquiry, and the assessment was generally fixed at the highest bid of a revenue farmer without considering the rights of actual cultivators. In the first ten years of the British rule over these territories the revenue had gone up by as much as 19 per cent. over the highest amount ever collected by the Nawab of Avadh. Such a heavy assessment, the severity of the method of collection, and the immediate sale of the land in default of payment of rent filled the cup of misery of the poor cultivators.

The Board of Commissioners, appointed in 1807, did not finish its labours till 1819 when the Secretary, Holt Mackenzie, formulated its recommendations in his famous minute, dated 1 July, 1819. It formed the basis of the Regulation VII of 1822, according to which the settlement was to be made largely with the village *Zamindars* (peasant proprietors) who were organized in village communities and generally cultivated their own lands. In lieu of their rights, the other classes like the landlords or *Talukdars,* who had rights in the land, were generally granted compensation from the Government treasury which was collected from the village *Zamindars.* The basis for the settlement was the 'net produce', which meant that portion of the gross produce of land which remained after deducting the expenses of cultivation, including the profits of stock and wages of labour i.e. expenditure on labour and capital by the cultivators. The

Regulation recommended a cadastral survey of the land, and the settlement officers were required to compute very carefully the actual produce of each *bigha* of land and the cost of its cultivation. The gross income of the cultivator was fixed on the basis of the average price for several preceding years, and the revenue was assessed after deducting the expenses of cultivation The result was delay and over-assessment, for the demand of the State amounted to 83 per cent. of the gross rental of estates. The revenue officials looked upon the detailed process of settlement as too irksome. The British manufacturers were also opposed to it, for as the assessment of revenue was made according to crops, there was no inducement to the production of cotton, sugar, indigo and such other raw materials required by the British industry.

These considerations as well as the excessive assessments induced Lord Bentinck to introduce a new mode of settlement by the Regulation IX of 1833. The great task of carrying out the settlement operation on the line of this Regulation was entrusted to Robert Merttins Bird. Its main features may be summed up as follows:—

1. The basis of assessment was changed from 'net produce' to 'rental assets'. Instead of calculating the actual produce and its value, the settlement officers had to ascertain the rents payable on lands of particular qualities and thus fix the land-tax for a fiscal area. Two-thirds of the total rental thus determined was fixed as the land-revenue and one-third to be left to the proprietors, whether *Zamindars* or *putteedars*. The land-tax for the whole area was then apportioned among the villages contained within the area.

2. The assessment was fixed unalterably for 30 years.

3. The rights of all persons who held a heritable land and transferable property in the soil were recognized and recorded. Thus all the village *Zamindars* who had survived the vagaries and irregularities of the different types of assessment in the past were recognized as cultivating proprietors of their lands, and the rights of each of them were defined and kept in permanent records.

4. Settlements were made with the village *Zamindars*, including those who had hitherto been paying revenue through the *Talukdars*. These *Talukdars* were granted an allowance equal to 18 per cent. of the total revenue collected by the Government, and this amount was to be paid from the treasury. It was, however, laid down in 1844, that the 18 per cent. was to be paid only to the original grantee during his life, his successors being paid only 10 per cent. which was fixed as the regular allowance.

5. A detailed land survey was undertaken and a complete record of each cultivated field was made. So, assessment was made even of the lands which village communities had hitherto managed to conceal. Its effect was that the village communities had no reserves left to fall back upon in time of emergency, and all their resources were thus exhausted.

6. A large scale resumption of rent-free tenures was made. The total revenue yielded by such lands in the N.W.P. (excluding Delhi and Saugor Division) for the period 1835 to 1848 amounted to Rs. 1,22,56,221. The harsh measures adopted by over-zealous subordinate officers to resume rent-free tenures were adversely commented upon by T. C. Robertson, the Lieutenant-Governor, as follows:—

"The Settlement Officer swept up without inquiring every patch of unregistered rent-free land, even those under ten Bighas (three acres) exempted by a subsequent order, which did not come out before five-sixths of the tenures had been resumed. In one district, that of Farakkabad, the obligations of a treaty and the direct orders of Government were but lightly dealt with; and in all, a total disregard was evinced for the acts even of such men as Warren Hastings and Lord Lake".

Still more emphatic was the Lieutenant-Governor's condemnation of the manner in which the rights of hereditary landlords had been interfered with. The following is one of the instances cited.

"The Raja of Mynpuri, whose predecessor had received the highest acknowledgments from the British Government for his unshaken loyalty, when the district was overrun by Holkar's army in the year 1804, was, without a reference to Government, under the construction put on the right of a Talukdar, deprived entirely, he and his successors in perpetuity, of all power of interference in 116 of the 158 villages included in his Taluka, which had descended to him in regular succession before the introduction of the British rule".

Another observation of the Lieutenant-Governor is worth quoting. He characterized the mode of assessment to be "of a decidedly levelling character, and calculated so to flatten the whole surface of society as eventually to leave little of distinguishable eminence between the ruling power and the cultivators of the soil. It is a fearful experiment, that of trying to govern without the aid of any intermediate agency of indigenous growth; yet it is, what it appears to me, that our measures, now in progress, have a direct tendency

to bring about".[88] "At the same time it should be remembered that Bird's declared intention to make the assessment perpetual, where the lands were fully cultivated and assessed, has been disregarded by later administrators; and his desire to eventually follow the same practice in other districts, as they came more fully under cultivation, has not been fulfilled. On the contrary, the levelling character of the measures, deplored by T. C. Robertson in 1842, are more noticeable after the lapse of sixty years. The village Patwari, paid by the Government, is the master of the situation in North India to day".[89]

James Thomason, who succeeded Robertson as Lieutenant-Governor in 1843, removed some of the evils pointed out by his predecessor. In 1849 he completed the work of Merttins Bird and closed the great settlement. Special importance attaches to the "Directions for Settlement officers" which he issued in 1844. It is justly looked upon as "the first complete Land Settlement Code" compiled in India, and some of the principles enunciated by Thomason were later embodied in the Tenancy Acts of the different provinces of India. Merttins Bird's assessments were revised after he had left India and reduced by the exemption of many rent-free tenures. In this modified form the Settlement was approved by the Court of Directors in 1851.

The two most serious defects of this settlement were, first, that the fixing of the land-tax for an entire fiscal area like a *pargana* was more or less guess work; secondly, the land-tax amounting to two-thirds of the net produce was excessive and proved to be a crushing burden to the landlords and cultivators. This painful truth soon became evident to the Government itself, and new rules were issued in 1855, reducing the land-tax to 50 per cent. instead of 66 per cent. They formed part of the new rules which were issued in connection with the re-settlement of the Shaharanpur District and are therefore generally known as the "Shaharanpur Rules". The 50 per cent. basis was gradually adopted in land-settlements in other parts of India.

The settlement in N.W.P. came to be known as Mahalwari Settlement, as the basis of assessment was the produce of a Mahal or estate. All the proprietors of a Mahal were, severally and jointly, responsible in their persons and property for the sum assessed by the Government on the Mahal. If the number of proprietors were numerous, a few were selected as representatives of the whole and made responsible for the management of the Mahal and payment of the revenue.

B. BOMBAY

The British came into the possession of the major part of the Bombay Presidency after the Third Maratha War in 1818, as a result of the annexation of the Peshwa's dominions. The most characteristic feature of the administration of the Maratha country at the time was the system of village communities, which formed so many miniature States, "almost sufficient to protect their members if all other Governments are withdrawn".[90] The other important feature of the Maratha rule was "the cultivation of the land by peasant proprietors, called Mirasdars or hereditary owners of their fields". "A large portion of the Ryots were the proprietors of their estates, subject to the payment of *a fixed land tax* to Government; their property was hereditary and saleable; and they were never dispossessed while they paid their tax".[91]

The new British administrators swept away both these institutions. They adopted the Ryotwari Settlement, already introduced in Madras with disastrous consequences. The main features of this settlement were: (1) assessment upon every separate cultivator; (2) the measurement of fields and an estimate of the yield; and (3) the fixing of Government demand at 55 per cent. of the produce. As could be expected on the analogy of what happened in other provinces, the measurement was faulty, the estimates of produce were wrong, and the revenue was excessive. The Bombay Administration Report of 1872-3 describes the result as follows:—"Every effort, lawful and unlawful, was made to get the utmost out of the wretched peasantry, who were subjected to torture, in some instances cruel and revolting beyond all description, if they would not or could not yield what was demanded. Numbers abandoned their homes and fled into the neighbouring Native States. Large tracts of land were thrown out of cultivation, and in some districts no more than a third of the cultivable area remained in occupation".[92]

A new system was introduced in 1835, associated with the names of Goldsmid and Wingate, and based on a complete survey of lands. "The plan adopted by Goldsmid and Wingate was very simple. They classed all soils into nine different classes according to their quality; they fixed the assessment of a district after inquiries into its circumstances and previous history; and they distributed the district demand among the villages and fields contained in the district. The owner of each field was then called upon to cultivate his holding on payment of the Land Tax fixed for his field". "The assessment was fixed by the Superintendent of Survey without any reference to the cultivator; and when those rates were introduced, the holder of each field was summoned to the Collector and informed of

the rate at which his land would be assessed in future; and if he chose to retain it on those terms, he did; if he did not choose, he threw it up".[93] So the Ryotwari Settlement was continued in Bombay. "The rules of the Settlement were finally gathered up in 1847 in what is known as the *Joint Report,* signed by H. E. Goldsmid, Captain Wingate, and Captain Davidson. This *Joint Report* of 1847 was the basis of the Bombay Settlement, as Thomason's Directions to Settlement Officers, published in 1844, was the basis of the Settlement in Northern India".[94]

This Settlement was undoubtedly a great improvement upon the existing one, and future settlements were made on this basis for recurring periods of thirty years. But its defects were similar in character to those of N. W. P. The assessment was a guess-work, and likely to vary with each settlement according to the mood of the new settlement officers. The cultivators lost their right to hereditary tenure of lands at fixed rates and had no inducements to effect any permanent improvement as there was no security against arbitrary enhancement of the State demand. By making arrangement with individual cultivator and ignoring the village communities the British Government gave a death-blow to these indigenous self-governing institutions.

Even the Sadar Board of Revenue and the Government of India, painfully aware of the ruin brought upon Madras by the Ryotwari Settlement, doubted the propriety of the new system. The Bombay Government defended their action by citing the example of N.W.P. It was, however, ignored that there was an essential difference between the two. "In Northern India the assessment was made for an entire estate or village, and the owners of the estate or the village collectively could protest with some effect if the guess-work assessment was wrong. In Bombay, every field was separately assessed, and the humble cultivator of a field had little chance of redress if the Settlement Officer made a wrong guess".[95] Nevertheless, the protest of the Sadar Board of Revenue in 1838 was no more successful than that of the Madras Board of Revenue in 1818. It is interesting to note that some highly placed British officials fully recognized the baneful effects of the Ryotwari system in Bombay and had the courage to state in public that by sweeping aside Village Communities and intermediate landlords the cultivators were reduced to a race of paupers.

C. MADRAS

The early history of the land-revenue system in Madras has been described in the preceding volume. Even so late as 1818 the Madras

Board of Revenue pleaded in favour of recognizing the Village Communities and making land revenue settlements with them. But the existence of self-governing bodies was incompatible with the absolute form of British Government. Sir Thomas Munro was the Governor of Madras from 1820 to 1827, and during his regime the Ryotwari Settlement was introduced everywhere in Madras save in those areas where Permanent Settlement had already been introduced. The special feature of this settlement was that the Government demand on each plot of land was permanently fixed and each cultivator could take or reject the field offered, if he thought the rent excessive. Munro reduced the assessment from one-half of the estimated produce of the fields to one-third and remedied many other evils of the system. But one-third of the produce represented in many cases the entire economic rent and as such even the new system proved to be highly oppressive. Two other factors aggravated the evils of the system. In the first place, the cultivators had to pay a fixed sum of money irrespective of the actual yield or current prices Secondly, the land-revenue was not collected through local bodies of villagers as in the North-West Provinces, but low-paid agents were employed for the purpose who made good for the deficiency in their salary by unjust extortions from the helpless tenants enforced by cruel and oppressive methods.

So long as Sir Thomas Munro was at the helm of affairs, his benevolence and constant supervision kept the evils within limit. His death in 1827 removed this healthy check and "for thirty years the Province of Madras became a scene of oppression and agricultural distress unparalleled even in India in that age".[96] The following extracts from the reports of Collectors of various Districts would convey some idea of the actual situation.

"Bellary District—The Collector reported in 1845: "The universal complaint and request of the Ryots is to be allowed to reduce their farms, a convincing proof that cultivation is not profitable. Ryots, formerly substantial, and capable of laying out their capital on the lands, and liquidating their Sircar (State) demand, reserving their produce until they could get a favourable price, are now sunk in debt bearing heavy interest, entirely subject to their creditors; and were it not for the aid of the Collector through his revenue subordinates, one-half, or at least one-third, of the highly assessed lands would ere this have been thrown up....With regard to food and raiment, the majority of them are poorly clad and ill-fed, and it is impossible to arrive at any other conclusion than that poverty is the cause".[97]

"Rajamundry, afterwards called Godavari District, appeared, from the report of Sir Henry Montgomery in 1844, to have been on the verge of ruin. There were famines in 1830 and 1831; the seasons were unfavourable in 1835, 1836 and 1837, and calamitous in 1838, 1839 and 1840. The population, which was 695,016 in 1830 had decreased to 533,836 in 1840."[98]

"Gantur and Masalipatam—The famine of 1833, known as the Gantur famine, was the severest on record in these parts Captain Walter Campbell, who was an

eye-witness, stated : "The description in *The Siege of Corinth* of dogs gnawing human skulls is mild as compared with the scene of horror we are daily forced to witness in our morning and evening rides.... It is dreadful to see what revolting food human beings may be driven to partake of. Dead dogs and horses are greedily devoured by these starving wretches; and the other day, an unfortunate donkey having strayed from the fort, they fell upon him like a pack of wolves, tore him limb from limb, and devoured him on the spot". In the Gantur portion of the Krishna district from one-third to half of the whole population perished. An epidemic broke out in the following year, and "a man in perfect health was hardly to be seen anywhere".[99]

All this is corroborated by the report on the general condition of the Madras ryot, drawn up in 1853 by Bourdillon, one of the best-known Madras officials of his day.

"A very small proportion of the cultivators who were favourably assessed or held revenue-free lands, or possessed other exceptional advantages, were well to do, and, with an income of 30 to 40 shillings a month, were accounted to be very well off. An income of £ 3 to £ 5 a month was very rare even among these classes."

The large majority of the cultivators, however, were always in poverty and generally in debt. "A Ryot of this class of course lives from hand to mouth; he rarely sees money except that obtained from the Chetty (money-lender) to pay his kist (instalment of Government revenue); the exchanges in the out-villages are very few, and they are usually conducted by barter. His ploughing cattle are wretched animals not worth more than 3½ to 6 rupees each (7 to 12 shillings), and those perhaps not his own, because not paid for. His rude and feeble plough costs, when new, no more than 2 or 3 shillings; and all the rest of his few agricultural implements are equally primitive and inefficient. His dwelling is a hut of mud walls and thatched roofs, far ruder, smaller, and more dilapidated than those of the better classes of Ryots above spoken; and still more destitute, if possible, of anything that can be called furniture. His food and that of his family is partly their porridge made of the meal of grain boiled in water, and partly boiled rice with a little condiment; and generally the only vessels for cooking and eating from are of the coarsest earthware, much inferior in grain to a good tile or brick in England, and unglazed. Brass vessels, though not wholly unknown among this class, are rare".[100]

The evils were not accidental, but inherent in the Ryotwari system itself. This was exposed by George Campbell who later became Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal and then member of Parliament. He wrote the following account of the Madras system in 1852:

"Only imagine one Collector dealing with 150,000 tenants, not one of whom has a lease; but each pays according as he cultivates and gets a crop, and with reference to the number of his cattle, sheep, and children; and each of whom gets a reduction if he can make out a sufficiently good case. What a cry of agricultural distress and large families there would be in England or any other country under such a system! Would any farmer ever admit that his farm had yielded anything, that his cattle had produced, or that his wife had not produced? If the Collector were one of the prophets and remained in the district to the age of Methuselah, he would not be fit for the duty; and as he is but an ordinary man and foreigner and continually changed, it would be strange if the native subordinates could not do as they liked, and, having power, did not abuse it. Accordingly, it is generally

agreed that the abuses of the whole system, and specially that of remissions, is something frightful; chicanery and intrigue of all kinds are unbounded; while the reliance of the Madras Collector on informers by no means mends the matter".[101]

The evils of the system were rendered far worse by the use of torture, "*almost universal* in the Province for the prompt realisation of the assessed revenue from the miserable cultivators".[102] The question being raised in course of a discussion in the British House of Commons, the Government of India was forced to appoint a Commission of Enquiry consisting of three Englishmen.

"They found, that the practice of torture for the realisation of the Government revenue existed in the Province; and they also found that injured parties could not obtain any redress".[103] "The kinds of torture which were most common were: keeping a man in the sun; preventing his going to meals or other calls of nature; confinement; preventing his cattle from going to pasture; quartering a peon on him; the use of *Kittee Anundal*, i.e. tying a man down in a bent position; squeezing the crossed fingers; pinches, slaps, blows with fist or whip, running up and down; twisting the ears, making a man sit with brickbats behind his knees; putting a low caste man on his back; striking two defaulters' heads, or tying them by the back hair; placing in the stocks; tying by the hair to a donkey's or a buffalo's tail; placing a necklace of bones or other degrading or disgusting materials round the necks; and occasionally, though rarely, more severe discipline".[104]

"One thing which came out very clearly during this inquiry was that where *the land was severely assessed, the cases of torture were frequent.* And Bourdillon, the Collector of North Arcot, recorded his opinion that torture for the purposes of revenue "might have ceased entirely by this time, but for the exorbitant demand on the land, and some particular incidents of the revenue system in these Provinces".[105]

'The Sadar Board of Revenue made a strong protest to the Government of India against the over-assessment and attendant evils of the Madras Ryotwari System. In a letter dated 20 March, 1838, they pointed out the fraud and oppression practised by every low-paid officer of the State, and deprecated the harassing and inquisitorial searches made into the means of every cultivator. But neither the censure of the Sadar Board nor the melancholy reports continually received from District Collectors induced the Madras Government to reform its wretched land administration'.[106] While the Madras Government continued it, without any attempt at effecting reforms such as were made in Bombay and N.W.P., the Madras officials took every opportunity to extend the system. Such opportunities came when permanently settled estates were sold for non-payment of revenue. It has even been alleged by a British official that such sales were not unoften deliberately brought about by the Collector. He writes : "Meet a Ryotwari Collector in his own house, at his hospitable board, he will admit that the sale of a great Zemindari which he had just achieved was brought about by dexterous management; that the owner had been purposely permitted to

get into the meshes of the Collector's net beyond his power of extrication; that the sale could easily have been obviated, nay, perhaps was uncalled for". Some specific instances cited by this writer may be mentioned here.

"In Tinnevelly District, the proprietor of the ancient Chocumpati estate came to the Collector to arrange a settlement of the arrear due from his estate, but he was seized as a disaffected and dangerous character; was kept in confinement as a political offender without any specific charges being preferred against him; and his estate was confiscated. In Nellore District the Mahomedan Jaigirdar of Udaigiri was similarly confined for life for alleged treason without a trial; and his estate was also confiscated. In Gantur District the great Vassy-Reddy possessions, yielding a revenue of £ 60,000 a year, were sold for £ 500 for arrears which had accrued during the management of the estate by Government Officers as trustees. In Masalipatam District the Nedadavole estates, worth £ 3000 a year, were sold for £ 1200. In Vizagapatam District the ancient Zemindari of Golgonda, worth £ 1000 a year, was sold for £ 10. And as these and other estates were sold one by one, the Ryotwari system was introduced in the lands".[107]

In course of the Parliamentary inquiry into the affairs of India in 1852 and 1853, preceding the renewal of the Charter of the East India Company in 1853, the evils of the Madras system were fully exposed by several witnesses. This forced the Madras Government to take steps to remedy the evils. Their plan was based upon "an accurate survey and careful settlement of the land revenue". The elaborate order which they issued on this subject in 1855 makes very interesting reading. It was admitted that "at present, cultivation is undoubtedly repressed by the heavy burdens on the land direct and indirect", with the result that there was "a vast extent of unoccupied land, with a peaceful and industrious population scantily fed and scantily employed to the extent of being led to cross the sea in search of employment, though peculiarly averse to leaving home...".[108] Nothing can be a greater indictment upon the system to which the Government of Madras clung with tenacity for more than half a century, and then awoke, like Rip Van Winkle, to discern its evils causing wide-spread misery,—a fact which was patent to everybody all the while.

D. THE PANJĀB

Reference has been made above to the policy of John Lawrence, the Chief Commissioner of the Panjāb. In pursuance of it he issued direction that while the assessment should be low, the middlemen should be eschewed, for "they are the curse of the country everywhere".

Though the latter part of this instruction was carried to the letter, the first part was not. The assessment was by no means low. Henry Lawrence, while ruling the Panjāb as Resident, had substi-

tuted the British system of collecting land revenue in money for the old system of payment in kind. This aggravated the evils of the over-assessment during the British rule.

"In 1847-48 the Land Revenue of the Punjab was £ 820,000. Within three years after British annexation it went up to £ 1,060,000. The fall in prices added to the distress of the cultivators, now required to pay their revenue in money. The complaint during the year 1851 on the part of the agriculturists was loud and general." "There has been a very general demand among the agriculturists for a return to grain payments, to a division or appraisement of the crops every season. The Board have resisted this call, but have directed the suspension of revenue wherever it appeared desirable".[109]

As the demand of one-third the gross produce payable in money proved oppressive to the cultivators, it was reduced to one-fourth and then to one-sixth of the gross produce. The wisdom of this policy was proved by the fact that though the demand of land revenue diminished, the actual collections did not show any decrease.

E. IRRIGATION

The system of irrigation is closely connected with land revenue. Early in the nineteenth century, when the British had got possession of considerable parts of Upper India, they turned their attention to the repair of the canals which had been constructed by the Muslim rulers but neglected during the political chaos and confusion of the eighteenth century. But not much was done till 1823, when Col. John Colvin was appointed General Superintendent of Irrigation at Delhi and completed the restoration of the West Jamuna Canal which had been begun by Lt. Blaine. The canal was about 445 miles long, and during the famine of 1837 its water saved crops of the estimated value of a million and a half sterling.

The East Jamuna canal was then taken up and completed with some additions, the total length being 155 miles. The restoration of the Ganges canal, about nine hundred miles long, though begun before 1858, was not completed till some time after it. The Company's Government also excavated the Bari Doab Canal, about 450 miles long, in the Panjāb.

Not much was done to restore and preserve the numerous reservoir tanks, constructed for irrigation by the old Hindu rulers and chiefs of South India, whose remains lie scattered over the whole region. But big irrigation projects were undertaken in 1836 to utilize the water of the Coleroon (branch of the Kaveri) by improv-

ing the ancient anicuts built by the Hindu rulers about two thousand years ago. In addition to the Upper and Lower Coleroon anicuts, subsidiary works were undertaken for conveying irrigation over the district of Tanjore and portions of Trichinopoly and South Arcot. The following figures give an idea of the immensity of the undertaking and its result.

Total area irrigated .... 716,000 acres.
Total expenditure .... £ 180,000.
Increase of land revenue . ... £ 44,000 per annum.

The credit for this great work must go to Sir Arthur Cotton, who first conceived the idea and carried it against much opposition. He next took up the *Godavari Works* which has made him famous. Unfortunately, the Company's Government and the Crown Administration that succeeded it gave him only a grudging support. Referring to this his biographer observes:

"It has taken thirty-two years to obtain £ 700,000 for them—£ 20,000 a year for works which from the very first had been almost prodigious success...The only dispute is whether they yield 27, 28, or 40 per cent; and now after thirty-two years only 700,000 acres out of one million are irrigated...During this time there was not the least question about £ 500,000 for sixty miles of railway to Nagpur, which it was acknowledged would not pay 4 per cent".[110]

The next great work was the anicut across the Krishna river commenced in 1853. These irrigation works considerably extended the area and improved the prospect of cultivation, but unfortunately, the people did not derive much benefit out of it. For the land revenue was raised as much as possible, "leaving the unfortunate cultivators as permanently poor as they were before". As noted above, the *Coleroon Works* yielded a return of 24 per cent., and while constructing the *Godavari* and the *Krishna Works* the Company estimated an increase of land revenue, respectively, by 100 and 30 per cent. on the outlay. These figures show that the British policy was ungenerous in the extreme and inspired by the idea of profit rather than the material interests of the cultivators.

F. INAM

An important question connected with the settlement of lands was the British policy of the resumption of Inams. These were rent-free tenures of land, sometimes even of entire villages, granted in perpetuity by the Hindu and Muslim rulers in the past, either to an individual as a reward for public service or distinguished talents, or for the maintenance of religious or charitable institutions and pious learned Brahmins or Muslim saints. The grant usually took the

form of an assignment of the land revenue due to the State, and was liable to abuses by manipulation of records, particularly when the Government supervision was lax, as, for example, during the political chaos and confusion of the eighteenth century. From the very beginning of their rule the British were very keen on resuming the unauthorized assignments. This caused considerable difficulty even to the genuine holders of Inams, for the family held the grants for centuries but could not produce the original deeds of grant. The rule for resumption of grants was gradually tightened against the holders.

By the rules of 1793, the Collectors had to proceed by instituting regular suits in court as plaintiffs, against any person holding rent-free land without a valid tenure. The Regulation VIII of 1811 authorized Collectors in Ceded and Conquered Provinces, with the sanction of the Revenue Board, to resume and assess such lands, leaving parties aggrieved to contest the resumption by a suit in a court. Whatever might be the legal justification of the resumptions carried out on a large scale, the denial of prescriptive rights not only caused grave resentment to the parties directly concerned but also upset a social and economic order of long standing. This was fully realized by the Government. A resolution of the Government of India, dated August, 1822, referred to the wide-spread disturbance of tranquillity and good order of the country, and then "frankly admitted that the evil consisted not so much in the change itself as in the rapidity with which it was introduced; the sudden demand of a full revenue in place of a light assessment was calculated to drive the uprooted elements to acts of violence, who, under a more gradual course of measure, would be converted into industrious and peaceful cultivators".[111]

But the Government continued vigorously "the policy of resumption, which was still more detailed by Regulation II of 1819 and Regulation III of 1828. The latter provided for the establishment of special commissioners with a view to prosecuting the investigation of the titles of persons claiming rent-free lands. Again, Regulation V of 1831 sought to check the practice of granting Inams in the form of an assignment of the land-revenue of large areas which were retained in perpetuity by 'devolution and adoption', and in 1845, an order was passed restricting the tenure of these grants to existing lives".[112]

An Inam Commission was appointed in Bombay in 1852. Further references to this practice which caused grave discontent, leading to violence and armed resistance on the part of the people, will be made later.

G. GENERAL REVIEW

The different systems of assessment of land revenue described above betray certain general tendencies on the part of the British administrators. The most important of them was to eliminate, as far as possible, intermediate agencies, and to establish direct relation with the cultivators. It had two great advantages from imperialist point of view. In the first place, influential middlemen are potential enemies of a totalitarian State and not so amenable to control as an isolated helpless ryot, who has no means to resist. Secondly, village communities or similar indigenous organizations of local self-government are likely to come into conflict with, and create aversion against, the absolute authority of the local British officials. By discarding all these agencies or at least reducing them to impotence, British imperialism and autocracy could ride roughshod over the people.

Another important characteristic was to raise the assessment as high as practicable, irrespective of its consequences to the people. This need not be attributed to any inherent malevolence on the part of the Government or officials, but was probably due mainly to ignorance and greed, whetted by need for more and more money. But it betrays a supreme indifference and lack of sympathy to the governed, produced by a spirit of racial arrogance and superiority complex.

If, as a British historian has put it, "the measure of Indian prosperity was the condition of the peasantry", no historian can probably describe British India as even moderately prosperous, in any sense of the term. The *Ryotwari* system reduced the cultivators to a state of wretched misery which differed in degree, but not in kind, in different parts of India. The slightly modified forms of the system in North India also proved highly oppressive till at least the middle of the nineteenth century. The tenants in the permanently settled estates were, no doubt, in a better condition, but it would be nothing short of euphemism to describe their condition as prosperous, in any degree.

The first fifty years of British rule in India witnessed the ruin of her trade and industry, driving an increasingly large proportion of her people to the lands. The next fifty years of British rule brought the cultivators as a class, forming nearly four-fifths of the population, to the brink of ruin and destruction. Ninety per cent. of them never had two square meals a day or decent cloth and house fit for human beings. Thus was laid the foundation of that abject and universal poverty of India, which forms the chief characteristic feature of the first century of British rule in India. It was not

yet redeemed, to any appreciable extent, by those of its blessings which affect the lives of the people in general, namely, peace and security of life and property.

The views of educated and liberal-minded Indians in respect of land-settlement may be gathered from the opinions expressed by Raja Rammohan Roy.

"The Select Committee of the House of Commons, which was appointed in February, 1831, and reappointed in June to consider the renewal of the Company's Charter, invited him to appear before it. Rammohun declined this request but tendered his evidence in the form of successive "Communications to the Board of Control." The first of these dealt with Revenue. The Raja appears here as the champion of the rack-rented *ryot* (peasant). While the Zamindars or land-holders had been greatly benefited by the Permanent Settlement of 1793, while their wealth and the wealth of the community had generally increased, the poor cultivator was no better off. The remedy he asked for was, in the first place, the prohibition of any further rise in rent, and secondly—rents being now so exorbitantly high as to leave the *ryot* in a state of extreme misery,—a reduction in the revenue demanded from the Zamindar so as to ensure a reduction in the *ryot's* rent. The decrease in revenue he would meet by increasing taxes upon luxuries or by employing as Collectors low-salaried Indians instead of high-salaried Europeans".[112a]

The Raja was a strong advocate of the Permanent Settlement and discounted the view that the system had resulted in the loss of revenue to the State, as the following extract will show.

"The amount of assessment fixed on the lands of those provinces at the time of the Permanent Settlement (1793), was as high as had ever been assessed, and in many instances higher than had ever before been realized by the exertions of any government, Mohamedan or British. Therefore, the Government sacrificed nothing in concluding that settlement. If it had not been formed, the landlords (*Zamindars*) would always have taken care to prevent the revenue from increasing by not bringing waste lands into cultivation, and by collusive arrangements to elude further demands; while the state of the cultivators would not have been at all better than it is now. However, if the Government had taken the whole estates of the country into its own hands, as in the ceded and conquered provinces and the Madras Presidency, then by allowing the landholders only ten per cent. on the rents (*Malikanah*), and securing all the rest to the Government, it might no doubt have increased the revenue for a short time. But the whole of the landholders in the country would then have been reduced to the same condition as they are at present in the ceded and conquered Provinces of the Bengal Presidency or rather annihilated, as in many parts of the Madras territory; and the whole population reduced to the same level of poverty. At the same time, the temporary increase of revenue to Government under its own immediate management would also have soon fallen off, through the misconduct and negligence of the revenue officers, as shown by innumerable instances in which the estates were kept '*khas*,' i.e., under the immediate management of Government".

"Besides, Government appropriates to itself an enormous duty on the transit and exportation of the produce of the soil, which has, since the period of the Perpetual Settlement, increased to a great amount from the exertions of the proprietors in extending and

improving cultivation, under the assurance that no demand of an increase of revenue would be made upon them on account of the progressive productiveness of their estates".

The Raja contrasts the effects of the permanent and periodical systems of assessment in two statements:

"By a comparative view of the revenue of Bengal, Behar and Orissa, from the period of the Perpetual Settlement, it appears that, in the thirty-five years, from 1792-93 to 1827-28, there was a total increase on the whole amount of the revenue of above 100 per cent (101.71), and that this increase has been steady and progressive up to the present time;........"

"By a comparative view of the revenue of the old British territory in Madras, it appears that during the same period of thirty-five years (i.e., from 1793 to 1828) there was an increase of only about 40 per cent. (40 15) on the total amount of the whole revenue. That the increase during the first 17 years was 43 $\frac{21}{100}$ per cent.; that in the next 8 years the increase was only about 3½ per cent.; and that in the last 18 years there has been a decrease of 2.15 per cent".

In an appendix he very strongly urged the policy of fixing a maximum rent to be paid by each cultivator, so "that their rents, already raised to a ruinous extent, might not be subject to further increase."[112b]

VIII. POLICE AND PRISON ADMINISTRATION

1. *The Police*

At the time when the British began to rule in India, the duty of maintaining law and order was vested in the local landlords who were required to maintain a quota of troops to suppress internal disorders and to deal with theft and robbery. Lord Cornwallis relieved the landlords of their police duties and transferred them to the District Magistrates. Each District was divided into a number of *thanas*, each under a *daroga* with a number of armed men under him to maintain peace and order in the locality. This system, however, proved to be an "expensive failure". Crimes increased everywhere; robberies and murders, accompanied by atrocious cruelties, were of frequent occurrence, and "the people did not sleep in tranquillity." The *darogas* could not effectively check the forces of disorder, and they themselves were often notoriously corrupt. The Fifth Report noted that the *darogas* of the new system were "not less corrupt than the Tannahdars, their predecessors, and they themselves and the inferior officers acting under them, with as much

inclination to do evil, have less ability to do good than the zamindary servants employed before them."

In 1813 the Court of Directors appointed a Special Committee to enquire into the state of police administration in the Company's territories in India, and in 1814 the Court issued orders condemning the establishments of *darogas* and their subordinates and for re-establishing the village police. Sir Thomas Munro and Mr. Straton were appointed Commissioners to give effect to these orders, and on their recommendation was passed the Madras Regulation XI of 1816 for the establishment of a general police system throughout that Presidency. The system was thus described by Munro: "We have now in most places reverted to the old police of the country, executed by village watchmen, mostly hereditary, under the direction of the heads of the villages, *tahsildars* of districts and the Collector and Magistrate of the province. The establishments of the *tahsildars* are employed without distinction either in police or revenue duties, as the occasion requires". In Bombay, also, Regulation XI of 1827 established a police system "founded chiefly on the ancient usages of the country", and similar in essential features to that established in Madras in 1816.

In 1808 the Government of Lord Minto took a step to introduce "especial and expert control" by appointing a Superintendent of Police for a Division. The Superintendent had to work largely with the help of *goyendas* or spies, who were to trace the criminals. and the *girdawars* or overseers who were to apprehend them. But the *goyendas*, in collusion with the *girdawars*, actually committed "depredations on the peaceable inhabitants, of the same nature as those practised by the dacoits whom they were employed to suppress".

In the general changes, introduced by the Government of Lord William Bentinck in the Company's administration in India, the Divisional Commissioners or Commissioners of Revenue and Circuit were first appointed and the office of the Superintendent of Police was abolished, mainly on the ground of economy and partly also to prevent dual control over the Magistrate Soon the office of the Magistrate was transferred from the Judge to the Collector, and the Collector-Magistrate became the head of the police in his jurisdiction, and the Commissoner for each Division performed the function of the Superintendent of Police. In 1835 and 1837 the Commissioner was relieved of his judicial functions so that he might have more time to pay adequate attention to the affairs of the police and general administration.

But despite these changes, corruption and inefficiency in police administration increased. The Select Committee, appointed in 1832

to report on the affairs of the East India Company, pointed out the dark aspects of police administration.

The inefficiency and corruption of the Police are vividly described in the following passage in a contemporary periodical, quoted in the *Calcutta Gazette* of 30 April, 1827.

"It is common in the country when any case of burglary occurs in the house of any person, to prevent, if possible, its coming to the knowledge of the Magistrate, and the person robbed generally contrives to fill up the hole privately, in the course of the night and gives some bribe to the Chowkidars who may discover it: the reason of this is, that were he to give publicity to his loss, and make complaint before any public authority, he would seldom recover his property, but only have to pay the Amla something from the remainder. When a case of theft occurs, the Amla consider it an occasion of profit, and give full vent to their disposition for pillage and plunder."[113]

The *Calcutta Gazette* of 10 June, 1830, quotes a long letter published in the well-known vernacular paper *Chandrika*, adding that "we entirely concur in the opinion expressed by the correspondent of the *Chandrika*". A few passages from this letter are quoted below:

"...To detect theft, and to prevent the violence of rogues and robbers, the Magistrates have appointed in the various zillas, Police Darogas, Buksees, Muhuris, and Peons; but these men inflicted far greater distress on the poor inhabitants than either thieves or robbers can do, for when they come with great power and pomp, they seldom refrain from theft. Thieves use some caution in their villainy, but the Darogas and more particularly those belonging to the Police, plunder with violence" ..."Whenever a new Daroga arrives, he takes written engagement from all the Talookdars, their Gomasthas, Munduls and Peons, as is the custom; but forgets not to take a rupee for each engagement. From each Peon he exacts either four or eight annas. All these people pay the sum thus extorted, at first indeed, from their own purse, but afterwards levy it upon the householders as the legitimate deuceur of the Daroga. Thus he raises contributions on various pretexts from rogues, whose term of confinement has expired, from notorious characters, as well as from industrious. When therefore the people hear that a new Daroga has arrived, they tremble".[114]

"Whenever a theft has been committed in the dwelling of a householder, he labours in every possible mode to conceal it from the public office; for if it should get wind, that which the thieves have left, the officers will seize .."[115]

"Whenever a robbery has been committed in any house, the village watchman, if near, on that night, otherwise the next morning, gives information of it, and the Daroga, with all his establishment, proceeds to the house and opens the enquiry as commanded in the Regulations, and then makes a report to the Magistrate, who sends his Nazir; if the affair be one of murder or of very serious character, the Shristadhar, and several other officers. With them proceed constables, bearers, servants, and a large body of men, who are not provided with food by those officers; neither do I think it is found them by Government, for we find that the expense falls on the householders, or if he be poor, is raised by a general contribution. When they arrive at the village, they find out the men of property, seize and bind them and seeking only their own profit and advantage, remain there for a month till they have squeezed out as much money as they desire, as described in the

case of theft. They then seize two or three innocent individuals, make out a report as abovementioned and extol their own exertions to the Magistrate. When the Commissioner of Circuit arrives, the accused bring their own witnesses, establish their innocence, and are dismissed. Very large sums are expended monthly in support of the police establishment, and the officers of the Thannah are appointed solely to prevent theft and robbery; yet when thefts and robberies do occur, instead of their being reproved, those very crimes become to them a source of profit. Not one of them dreams of seizing the offenders; they look only to their own profits This is not pleasing to any Rulers, but it falls to the lot of the natives of Bengal through their own evil destiny".[116]

A writer in the *Calcutta Review* (1846), while recommending better payment to the *Daroga* and recruitment from better classes, observes as follows:—

"No person requires to be told of the evils resulting from the employment of uneducated persons—evils, the nature of which has been but too well ascertained by sad experience—and of the impossibility of living decently in this country under 100 Rupees. Our two latter propositions however require a little explanation.

"It is incumbent upon Government to change the name of Darogah, because it is one with which the most odious associations are connected,—one, which is almost synonymous with dakoit—which carries terror in its very sound—which reminds the poor cultivator of him over whom there is no control, of him who lives upon cruelty and extortion, and whose very vocation is corruption. No real native gentleman, however distressed his circumstances, will condescend to take a Darogaship as long as it bears its present designation. ..The present Darogahs are often the dregs of native society. When out of office they are held in the same estimation by their countrymen as porters and grooms. Imagine a durwan, with a salary of Rs. 50, placed in charge of an immense tract of land situated leagues away from the Sudar Kacheri, and holding command over some fifteen or twenty armed men,—his brethren as regards ability and dishonesty —and you have no inadequate conception of the head native Police officer of the present day If it be desirable to employ efficient and respectable persons as Darogahs,—the name must be changed—there is no alternative".[117]

In a charge to the Grand Jury in the Supreme Court on 7th January, 1825, the presiding Judge referred "to the many robberies which were committed of late in Calcutta", but observed that "he could not order a man for execution unless there was every precaution used by the Police to prevent the commission of the crime".[118]

A correspondent writes to the *Government Gazette* on March 1, 1830, that the Dhurrumtollah Road in Calcutta has been lately much infested with robbers and that great suspicion has fallen on the Chowkidars as being concerned in the several robberies lately committed.[119] Sir W. H. Sleeman, who served the Company in India in various capacities between 1809 and 1856, writes in his *Rambles and Recollections* (based on the Journal of his march from Jabalpur to Meerut, 1835-36):—

"Still, however, the inconvenience and delay of prosecution in our courts are so great and the chance of the ultimate conviction of the great offenders is so

small that strong temptations are held out to police to conceal or misrepresent the character of crimes, and they must have a great feeling of security in their tenure of office, and more adequate salaries, better chances of rising, and better supervision over them before they will resist such temptation. The Magistrate of a district gets a salary of from two thousand to two thousand five hundred rupees a month.[121] The native officer under him is the *Thanadar* or Head native police officer of a sub-division of his district, containing many towns and villages, with a population of a hundred thousand souls. This officer gets a salary of twenty-five rupees a month".[120] In Bengal a Committee was appointed in 1837 to draw up a plan for more efficient organisation of the mofussil police. The Committe submitted its report next year, but nothing was done immediately to reform the police in Bengal, and its abuses went on increasing. Sir George Campbell wrote in his *Modern India* in 1852 that the Bengal Police "has attained an unfortunate notoriety as being more active for evil than good. The misdeeds of the Bengal police may be a good deal exaggerated, but they are doubtless inefficient and apt to be corrupt. The chance of efficiency seems to be much lessened by the precautions which it is necessary to take against extortion and malversation on their part...It is certain that, at this moment, in many districts of Bengal, the inhabitants are not only in danger of secret thieves but of open robbers; that gang-robberies are frequent, and any man's house may be invaded in the night by armed force".[122]

Sir Frederick Halliday, who assumed the office of the first Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal in May, 1854, made some definite suggestions in April, 1855, to the Supreme Government for the improvement of the police. He suggested that the salary of the lower grades of police should be increased, and thereby proposed to remove what had hitherto been a standing reproach of Indian administration in Bengal.[123] No immediate orders were passed by the Government of India on this issue. But again in an elaborate Minute, dated 30 April, 1836, Sir Frederick Halliday pressed the question of improvement of the police and criminal administration in Bengal. He admitted the badness of the mufassal police and the corruptions of the village *chaukidars* and the inefficiency of the measures previously taken to improve them. He considered the thirty-nine sub-divisional magistrates, then existing, as inadequate to exercise effective control, and urged thorough reforms of the general administration of criminal justice in Bengal, as "the badness of the police and the inefficiency of the tribunals act and react upon each other". He added: "Whether right or wrong, the general native opinion is that the administration of criminal justice is little better than a lottery, in which the best chances are with the criminals; and I think this also is very much the opinion of the European mufassal community ...the corruption and extortion of the police which causes it to be popularly said that dacoity is bad enough, but the subsequent police enquiry very much worse".[124]

Sir Frederick Halliday considered the following five measures to be indispensably necessary: (1) "the improvement of the charac-

ter and position of the village *chaukidars* or watchmen, (2) adequate salaries and fair prospects of advancement to the stipendiary police, (3) the appointment of more experienced officers as covenanted *Zilla* Magistrates, (4) the appointment of one hundred more Deputy-Magistrates and the junction of judicial and executive power in all Magistrates, and (5) improvement in the Criminal Courts of justice". He also dwelt upon the importance of good roads and of a popular system of vernacular education".[125]

The proposals of the Lieutenant-Governor bore no fruit until after 1858. But in 1856 he succeeded in getting passed a *Chaukidari* or local Police Act, which came into operation chiefly in Bengal and the North-Western Provinces, its main object being "to provide for the watch and ward of the places to which it was extended". In such places *chaukidars* were appointed by the District Magistrate on such pay as they thought fit The expenses were met by the rates paid by the inhabitants, in proportions determined by *panchayats* or Committees of at least five men nominated by the Magistrate After the Santal insurrection a body of military police was raised for the internal defence of Bengal.

Meanwhile some reforms in police administration had been introduced in Sindh, Bombay, Madras and the Panjāb. After the annexation of Sindh in 1843, Sir Charles Napier organized there a regular police force, the chief features of which were "separate organisation, severance of police and judicial functions and a reasonable degree of discipline". In 1853 the Bombay Police was remodelled, the main features of reform being the "appointment to every District of a Superintendent who, while generally subordinate to the Magistrate, had exclusive control over the police; the appointment to every *tahsil* of a native Police officer, holding to the *mamlatdar* (*tahsildar*) the same relations as between the Superintendent and the Magistrate, and the transfer of the supreme control over the police from the court of Fauzdari Adalat to the Government". The last feature was abandoned in a few years, when the administration of the police was transferred to the Commissioner of Police, who was also Inspector of Prisons.

The Torture Commission of 1855[126] revealed glaring abuses in the working of the police in the Madras Presidency. It recommended separation of revenue and police functions and the placing of police administration under independent European officers. These were given effect to by Act XXIV of 1859 and the police was reorganized on English and Irish lines. The police administration of the Presidency was entrusted to a Commissioner of Police (subsequently called Inspector-General), who was assisted by deputies.

Each District was placed under a Superintendent and his assistants. The village watcher was not removed.

After the annexation of the Panjāb in 1849, police was organized there somewhat on the lines of the Sindh police. It had two branches —Civil Detective police and a Military preventive police.

2. *Thugs and Dacoits*

It is difficult to convey an adequate idea of the enormity of the crimes perpetrated by a particular class of the dacoits (robbers) known as *thugs*. These were organized bands of murderers who followed murder and robbery as hereditary professions. The *thugi* had been an institution for ages and its victims were to be counted not by hundreds, but by tens of thousands. Every year added to the victims of *thugs*.[126a] Disguised as travellers, following ordinary avocations of life, the *thugs* made friends with other unsuspecting fellow-travellers, and while accompanying them, strangled them from behind by means of a piece of cloth, with a small weight attached to one end, by suddenly swinging it, with great dexterity, round the neck of the intended victim. After murdering the travellers, they took away their money and other valuables and then buried them by the roadside. The disguises and crafty methods of these robbers probably earned for them the designation *thug* which ordinarily means a cheat. Before starting on expeditions to rob and murder, the *thugs* worshipped the goddess, known by various names such as Kālī, Durgā, Bhabānī etc. The two simple objects required for committing their foul crimes, namely, the strip of cloth for strangling the victims and the pickaxe for digging their graves, were consecrated in the temple of the goddess with due rite. The *thugs* regarded their victims in the same light as the animals sacrificed to these goddesses by pious Hindus in the normal courses of their worship.[127]

It is difficult to fix any particular date when this kind of crime originated or first attained general notoriety. Isolated instances of this may be traced to the thirteenth century A.D. But the *thugs* were a great terror almost all over India early in the nineteenth century. It was well-known both to the people and to the Government that hundreds, if not thousands, among those who left for journey abroad never returned to their homes and left no trace of their fate. The nature of *thugs'* activities was also no longer a secret or mystery. But it was not till the thirties that the British Government took any serious steps to suppress this foul crime. A Thagi and Dacoity department was created by Lord Bentinck, and in 1835 W. H. Sleeman was appointed General Superintendent of

the operations, and later Commissioner for the suppression of Thagi and Dacoity. The great problem of Sleeman was the difficulty of securing conviction. "So in 1836 a special act was passed by which any person convicted of belonging or having belonged to a gang of thugs became liable to imprisonment for life. Thus all that was necessary to secure conviction was to prove association of an individual with these pests of society. Encouraging approvers, Sleeman and his officers by indefatigable and comprehensive operations gradually put an end to thagi, rooting out what he justly calls "an enormous evil which had for centuries oppressed the people and from which it was long supposed that no human efforts could relieve them". "By 1852 the guild had been scattered, never again to re-assemble".[128] The name of Sleeman occupies an honoured place in Indian history for the successful exertions he made for the extirpation of the *thugs*, and the well-known work, *Confessions of a Thug*, by Meadows Taylor, gives a lurid picture of these criminal bands.

A kind of river *thugs* also carried on their nefarious activities in Bengal. Their *modus operandi* is thus described by a writer in the *Government Gazette* of 1st January, 1829.

"These pirates, generally, have Punsoys, or boats at their disposal They often come in two or three boats, each containing three or four men, and some six to eight—and get employment in the Ghats. The Ghat Mangee, who knows little or nothing of their character, or perhaps one of their club, recommends them to such as are desirous of their services, for which he receives a fee of one anna per rupee, and sometimes more. When these pirates succeed in obtaining a passenger, rich or poor, they, in some lonely spot, seize the opportunity to plunder and perhaps murder him, and, in a very few cases, a man escapes from their hands Hence the numerous casualties in the families of those who are obliged to travel by water. Some of the pirates who have no boats, generally hire one, and station themselves in some parts of the river, and assuming the character of men of authority, exact exorbitant sums from laden boats, as well as from those that contain travellers, if these resist their demands, then the most woeful cruelties are practised on them by these men. In many cases they are apprehended; but very often they escape detection".[129]

It was estimated in 1854 that about 250 boats were employed in carrying on piracies on the Ganga between Calcutta and Banaras.

Dacoities of ordinary character were also rampant and continued long after the *thugs* were suppressed. The Thagi police force checked the crime by breaking some gangs of dacoits, but there was again the difficulty of securing conviction. "So in 1843 an act was passed similar to that previously directed against thagi. To secure conviction it sufficed merely to prove association with a gang of dacoits either within or outside the Company's territories before or after the passing of the new measure." Doubt, however, arose as to the applicability of this enactment to dacoits who did not belong to

certain tribes therein specified. In 1851 this doubt was removed by further legislation. Kaye tells us that even then by terrorism, by producing numerous false witnesses, and by availing themselves of the barriers which the complicated machinery of the law placed between "the eyes of the British functionary and the crimes which were committed around him", the dacoits were still glorying in their exploits "as sportsmen do."

"In 1852 Wauchope, the magistrate of Hughli, forwarded to the superintendent of police a list of 287 dacoits belonging to three gangs which were concerned in eighty-three dacoities, adding that at least thirty-five gangs were then committing depredations near Calcutta. He was himself appointed special Dacoity Commissioner and, assisted by the new enactments, rapidly improved the situation. But the central difficulty of the situation was the fact that the sufferers were too apathetic to defend themselves individually, and even in 1859 the Dacoity Commissioner was still indispensable".[130]

On the whole the crime seems to have been steadily on the increase as the following table shows:[131]

		Cases	Arrested	Acquitted	Convicted
1838	..	36,893	43,787	12,191	26,669.
1844	..	43,487	82,987	30,809	45,025.
1845	..	117,001	86,623	32,831	50,235.

3. *Prison*

"The early Indian Jail system was, like its English prototype, insanitary, demoralizing, and non-deterrent".[132] Heavy punishments were inflicted on the prisoners; they were often employed in gang-labour on the roads; health rules were not observed, and death rate "exceeded 100 per mille".[133] The earliest attempt for prison reform was made by the Regulation of 1834 at the initiative of Lord Macaulay. At his suggestion a Committee was appointed on 2nd January, 1836, to collect information regarding the actual state of the jails in India and to prepare a plan for their improvement.

The report of the First Prisons Committee, dated 8 January, 1838, contained, among others, two recommendations involving organic changes—namely the abolition of outdoor labour, and a partial recognition of the solitary confinement within doors. Among the other recommendations may be mentioned (1) the building of great central penitentiaries; (2) a better classification of prisoners; (3) supply of rations instead of money allowance; (4) the abolition of the practice of permitting each convict to cook his own meals and (5) appointment of an Inspector of Prisons.[134] No change for the better was introduced until the passing of an Act in 1855, which

provided for the appointment of Inspector General of Prisons in each Presidency, and the passing of Act VII of 1856 by which the Judges of the Sadar Faujdari Adalat were relieved of the charge of jails.

IX. COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPORT

1. *Railways*

India had a brilliant tradition of State activities for the promotion of public works, before the English East India Company established their political supremacy here. Different parts of the country were interconnected by roads and water-transport for commercial and other purposes. Records of the early surveys of the East India Company, such as those of Martin in 1750, of Major James Rennell (1763-66), and of Hamilton Buchanan during the early years of the nineteenth century give us an idea of what had existed in the past in the shape of communications and facilities for travel and transport, especially in Northern India with its vast plains.

With the new political and economic changes in the West as well as in India, there was naturally a demand for improved and extended means of communications about the middle of the nineteenth century. It was in 1843-44 that the earliest proposals were made for construction of railways in India. These envisaged construction of railways by companies incorporated in England, a minimum profit being guaranteed by the East India Company for a definite period. So contracts were made with the East Indian Railway Company and the Great Indian Peninsular Railway Company, formed in 1845, for construction of two small railway lines near Calcutta and Bombay, respectively. In 1855, the total length opened was 121 miles from Calcutta to Ranigunge by the former and 37 miles from Bombay to Kalyan by the latter The Madras Railways completed 65 miles from Madras to Arcot in 1856. Five other Railway companies were formed, but their lines were not open before 1858.

It was Lord Dalhousie, who, during his term of Governor-Generalship of India (1848-56), launched important schemes of railway construction. In his famous Minute of 1853, Lord Dalhousie advocated the construction of a system of trunk lines connecting the interior parts of each Presidency with its chief port and the several Presidencies with one another. His objects for the introduction of railways in India, as he stated, were "to immensely increase the striking power of his military forces at every point of the Indian Empire", to "bring British capital and enterprise to India", to

"secure commercial and social advantages to India", and to "bring into the ports produce from the interior".

During the first period of railway construction in India, that is up to 1869, railway lines were constructed under a guarantee system by Joint-stock Companies. The Government of India guaranteed free lands for a term of 99 years, and an annual interest of five per cent. on all capital raised by them. The Companies were required to pay to the Government, when they earned more than five per cent., half the surplus in every half year. The Companies were to be under the general supervision and control of the Government, and after the first term of twenty-five years, or the second term of fifty years, the Government had the right of purchasing these railways on payment of all shares or capital stock in the Company concerned.

2. *Roads*

During the period of anarchy and confusion in the eighteenth century, constructions and repairs of roads were neglected. The following description, though specially applicable to Madras, may be taken as a fair picture of the general state of things in India: "When British rule was established, there was not a single road of any length fit for wheeled traffic; even the main streets of many of the largest towns were unusable by vehicles. Wheeled traffic was limited to rough farm carts on solid wheels. At first there was a good deal of military road-making, but the money spent on it was mostly wasted. Commercial roads were first considered in 1813; and then there was not a road which was not either ill-made or decayed. Bridges were almost unknown...In 1852 there was 'probably not a single mile throughout the presidency equal to an ordinary English turnpike road', and there were certainly not a thousand miles on which one could comfortably drive at six miles an hour".[135] There were almost no roads or bridges in Bengal. "Some idea of the backward state of communications may be formed from the facts that even in 1855-6 four streams on the Grand Trunk Road (from Calcutta to North-Western India) remained to be bridged, and that only then was a project for bridging the Hughli at or near Calcutta considered."[136]

Till about the middle of the nineteenth century, the East India Company's attention was mainly directed towards the construction and repair of only some military roads, and it evinced no interest in improving the state of transport for civil population. Shore wrote in May, 1833: "As to the roads, excepting those between the limits of the civil stations, 10 miles between Calcutta and Barrackpore is

all that we can boast of. In addition to this the foundations of a road between Benaras and Allahabad and of one between Jubbalpore and Mirzapur have been commenced, and an *attempt* is now making for another between Allahabad and Delhi; but unless the construction of these roads be on a better plan, and the provision for keeping them in repair on a better footing, than has been the case with the attempts hitherto made by the English in road-making, Government might just as well spare their money".[137]

Lord William Bentinck conceived the idea of a new trunk road connecting Calcutta with the Upper Provinces, and this project was pushed forward by Mr. Thomason, Lieutenant-Governor of North-Western Provinces from 1843 to 1853. The conquests of Lord Dalhousie created greater needs for control over roads, and road-construction in India received much impetus during his administration. Hitherto the main roads were under the control of a Military Board in each Presidency. An attempt was made to entrust general control over local road operations in Bengal and Northern India to the Military Board in Calcutta. But still the conditions continued to be chaotic. An important reform was made in 1854, by which the inefficient Military Boards were abolished and the charges of roads and other public works were made over to Public Works Departments, which were constituted in the Provinces under the general control of the Central Government, exercised through its newly established Public Works Secretariat.

This reform of Lord Dalhousie marks a new era in the improvement of communications in India. "His engineers metalled a longer mileage of roads than had been constructed by the four preceding governors-general. Before he resigned office a system of trunk lines had been sketched, and the first section of the East India Railway had been opened; the modern postal system had been inaugurated; a telegraph line ran from Calcutta to Agra. Modern India had begun to take shape."[138]

3. *Steam-vessels.*

In 1826, the first steam-vessel arrived at Indian shore direct from England.[139] Two years later a newspaper reports: "A large concourse of the inhabitants of Calcutta assembled at Kidderpore, on Saturday last (19 January, 1828) to witness the launch of the new Government Steam Vessel, from the Dockyard of Messrs. Kyd & Co. She was named the *Berhampooter* (*Brahmaputra*) by Commodore Hayes, and is intended solely for the River navigation. Her length is one hundred feet, her breadth eighteen; and burthen about one hundred and fifty-three tons, drawing not more than two feet and

seven inches of water. She has two Engines, of twenty-five horse power each, and promises to fulfil the object of her construction in all respects. Nautical men say, that She is a beautifully built vessel".[140] Another steamer, *the Hooghly*, for Government, of the same dimensions as the *Brahmaputra*, was launched on 29 March, 1828, for river navigation.[141]

A project was set on foot to open a regular communication between England and India by way of the Mediterranean. The following paragraph appeared in the *Observer* of 8 February, 1830. "The Meteor Steam-vessel, Lieutenant Symons, is to leave this port tomorrow, for Falmouth, from whence it is fully expected she will take out the Malta and India mails. The letters for India will be conveyed across the Isthmus of Suez to the Red Sea, by well-guarded couriers, for which, we understand, the Phasha (Sic) of Egypt has offered every facility; and it is expected that on their arrival on the borders of the Arabian Gulf, the Enterprise steamer, which was appointed to leave Bombay with letters for England, will be ready to receive the bags, and return with them to India. It is calculated that, should no unexpected obstacle intervene, the communication with India, by this route, may be effected in half the present time, which would be an important advantage to both countries".[142] Attempts were also made in 1830 to promote steam communication between India and England by the way of Cape of Good Hope. A Committee, set up in Calcutta for the purpose, offered thanks to Mr. Waghorn for the efforts he made to carry out this project. Thanks were also offered to Commodore Sir John Hayes for the zeal and ability displayed by him in forwarding the cause of steam communication between India and England.[143] Mr. Waghorn's attempts did not immediately succeed, but in course of twenty years regular communication was established between England and India by steam vessels in two stages—from England to the Mediterranean Coast of Egypt, and then after a short land-journey, from the head of the Red Sea to India.

X. GENERAL REVIEW.

The detailed account of the different branches of administration may be fittingly concluded with a general review based on the publicly expressed opinions of contemporary Indians whose position and status lend great weight to their views. For whatever may be the degree of excellence claimed for it, on abstract principles, the real merit of an administrative system depends to a very large extent upon the views and sentiments of the people affected by it.

We have the benefit of the views expressed by Raja Rammohan Roy, both in his writings as well as in his evidence before the Select Committee of the House of Commons in 1831, to which reference has been made above[144] in connection with the land-settlement. Raja Rammohan Roy was one of the most towering personalities of India in the nineteenth century, whose social, religious, and political views and activities have deeply influenced the course of Indian history during the last century and a half. He was a great admirer of the British Government in India and concluded one of his 'Appeals' by thanking "the Supreme Disposer of the Universe for having unexpecttedly delivered this country from the long continued tyranny of its former rulers".[145] But while the Raja fully appreciated the "more secure enjoyment of civil and religious rights" than was possible under the Muslim rule, and other blessings of the British rule, he was equally alive to the defects and deficiencies of the British system of administration and made constructive suggestions with a view to removing them Reference has already been made above to his scathing criticism of the oppressive land revenue and the consequent poverty of the cultivators, as well as to his observations on the annual drain of Indian wealth to Britain.[146] He proposed taxation on luxury goods to compensate the loss incurred by the reduction of land revenue suggested by him. He recommended three methods for ensuring good legislation for India. The first was the grant of freedom of the press in India, so that the Indian public may place before the Government their opinion on matters vitally affecting their interest, and bring to the notice both of the Government of India and the Court of Directors the grievances arising from tyrannical acts either of the officials or of the Government The second was the appointment of periodical commissions composed of persons unconnected with Indian Government, to investigate on the spot the condition of the Indians under the existing system of law and administration. The third was to ascertain the opinion of the aristocracy of wealth and intellect regarding any proposed law, which should be enacted finally by the Parliament after considering all the official and non-official views on the subject.[147] Rammohan also suggested various measures to remove the evils in the administration of justice One of his suggestions was the 'superintendence of public opinion'. He proposed that the people should watch the judicial proceedings in order to be satisfied that justice was being done He also recommended the revival of the old *panchayat* system in the shape of modern jury. He proposed that the judges of the Sadar Diwani Adalat should have the power of issuing *habeas corpus* according to the practice of the English courts and that the Magistrates should be liable to judicial prosecution, even for official acts, if they amount to abuse of power.

He recommended that the *Sadar Amins* should be stationed at such distances that the suitors might not have to travel far from their homes in order to seek justice. He was against reducing the salary of European Judges but demanded a substantial increase in the salary of Indian Judges.[148] Among other reforms suggested by him may be mentioned the substitution of English for Persian as the official language of the Courts of law, separation of the offices of Judge and Revenue Commissioners, and those of Judge and Magistrate, and the codification of laws.[149]

The views of Rammohan Roy clearly show that while the British system of administration was highly appreciated as marking a great improvement upon the existing system, the enlightened public opinion in India, already in the third decade of the nineteenth century, regarded it as outmoded, and demanded a higher and nobler one on the model of the British. The views of the Raja were taken up by his followers who suitably modified and enlarged them in the light of experience, and the persistent demand of the enlightened section of the Indians for various reforms may be taken as a fair measure of their condemnation of the system then in force. The state of Indian feelings in this respect about the middle of the nineteenth century may be gathered from the petitions submitted by the various political organizations of Indians to the British Parliament on the eve of the renewal of the Charter of the East India Company in 1853. As a specimen, reference may be made to the petition from Madras, the least politically advanced of the three Presidencies of Bengal, Bombay and Madras.

The Madras Native Association sent a petition signed by eleven members to the House of Commons on 21 May, 1853. In this petition they first enumerated the immediate grievances of the Madras Presidency which they considered to be the most important. These were four in number:—

(i) The agricultural rent is most oppressive and has reduced the cultivators to the extremity of wretchedness and poverty.

(ii) The Salt monopoly is a burden of the most painful and intolerable pressure on the poor.

(iii) The defects and evils attending general administration of justice. Reference is made to the delay and expenses of the Company's court of law. It is also pointed out that the system does not ensure that fair and open trial by their peers which obtains in the Queen's court and which should also be available to her Indian subjects.

(iv) The almost total negligence of national education, there being no provincial school established by Government throughout the entire Presidency, and only one at the capital.

In addition to the above major grievances, reference is also made to the insufficiency of roads, bridges and irrigation works, necessity for the reduction of public expenditure and need of a form of Local Government more generally conducive to the happiness of the subjects and prosperity of the country.

In an explanatory note it is said that the judicial service of the Company is a "refuge of the destitute", those persons, "who are too incompetent for the revenue Department, being transformed into Judges and dispensers of the Criminal and Civil Law of the Moffusil".

Many other grievances are also mentioned:—

(i) The enormous powers granted to the Governor-General.

(ii) Interference with the law of inheritance.

(iii) Undue favours shown to the converts to Christianity. It is also complained in this connection "that the judges of the Supreme Court of Judicature of Madras exercise their powers and authority in high-handed manner to the detriment of the Hindus". Reference is also made to "judges affected by religious bias which induces them to carry their peculiar creed to the bench of justice".

The petitioners also protest "against the injustice and injury they suffer from the system which places the resources of the Province at the disposal of the Supreme Government by which the importance of this portion of India is retarded and the poverty of the population augmented". As a remedy against this it is suggested that the Governor in Council of Madras should be allowed greater powers for providing for the welfare and prosperity of the people and that the Governor's Council should be composed of officials and non-officials in equal numbers, six or seven of each. The former are to be nominated by the Government and the latter to be selected by the Governor, out of a list of 18 or 21 persons chosen by the rate-payers of Madras.

The petitioners also suggest the reduction in the salaries of the Governor and other officials and the establishment of a Legislative Council as distinct from Executive Council in every province. The petitioners also advocate the introduction of popular element in the Supreme Legislative Council and recommend that besides Presidential representatives there should be three persons appointed from England. These three from England should constitute the Executive Council, the Governor-General being President of both.

The fusion of the Board of Control and the Court of Directors, or in the alternative, another body presided over by the Secretary of State for India is suggested.

The petitioners demand further the abandonment of the system of governing the country exclusively by the covenanted Civil Service. The recruitment to this service of young men fresh from schools in England, without knowledge of the world and ignorant of the language and customs of the Indians, is strongly deprecated. To remedy the evils inherent in the system the employment of the educated and trained natives is advocated.

On may 21, 1853, another petition was sent to Parliament by "the Madras Native Association and other Native inhabitants of the Presidency of Madras". This was by way of protest against the decision of Her Majesty's Ministry to refer the grievances, enumerated in the former petition, to the local Government. The petitioners point out that the revenue system against which they "stated their strongest objections" was commended by some servants of the Company. But, they continue, "this favourable opinion respecting the *ryotwari* settlement was given at an early period of its trial on a small scale, and was derived from the opinion of three or four Collectors, who had been instrumental to the introduction of the experiment The petitioners know that, under its operation, the *ryots* have been reduced to poverty and wretchedness; and your petitioners pray that, as the Parliament has been the author of it, or that, at least, it has been established by its sanction although in opposition to the opinion and wishes of the local authorities, who declared it to be contrary to the ancient national institutions, and unsuited to the condition and genius of the people, the same authority may now be the instrument of its abolition; not by acting upon the evidence of the Company's servants, taken in England, but by instituting a full and impartial enquiry into its merits and demerits, on the spot where it is in operation, and among and from the people who are suffering under its withering oppression.

"They, your Petitioners, are convinced that by no other mode will your Right Honourable House be able to form a just and clear judgment on the question so momentous to the native subjects of the Crown in the Presidency of Madras; for, without reference in this place to the bias from which the servants of the Company cannot be supposed to free themselves, when speaking as to the effects of the favourite system of their employers, and which they have contributed to enforce and maintain, your Petitioners will advert to a particular instance of misinformation given by a gentleman, who, without

being suspected of bias, has given positive evidence, the contrary of fact, before the Committee of your Right Honourable House."

After proving this charge against Mr. Charles Hay Cameron, formerly the fourth or Law Member of the Council of India, the petition continues:

"That your Petitioners allude to this circumstance chiefly to show the manifest uncertainty of the evidence taken before the Parliamentary Committees; and as the witnesses examined, without a single exception are persons who have received, or are still in the receipt of, benefits from the East India Company, your Petitioners are compelled to believe that the actual state of things cannot be correctly ascertained, without sufficient evidence being admitted on both sides of the several questions which have to be determined, and your Petitioners therefore humbly represent, that nothing except a full and impartial investigation, in this country, accessible to the complainants, as well as to the defendants, can place before your Right Honourable House the real state of India, and the existence of the many and heavy grievances of which they have complained as regards the Presidency of Madras; they therefore respectfully request that a Royal Commission may be appointed, before which they may have the opportunity of substantiating the facts advanced in their former petition

"That your Petitioners beg to represent that an Indian Commission is not altogether a novelty, there being a precedent in the one appointed in the year 1814, of which Sir Thomas Munro was the head, for the purpose of inquiring into and amending the judicial system then obtaining at this Presidency; but as not only the judicial system, but likewise that of the revenue, as also the various other complaints preferred by your Petitioners, imperatively demand investigation at this critical period, your Petitioners pray that the Commission they now seek may be constituted upon the widest practicable basis, to the end that the inquiry may be searching, impartial and complete, and that no permanent legislation for India may be undertaken until the fullest information possible shall have been laid before, and fully discussed by, the Imperial Parliament of the United Kingdom

"That your Petitioners have already requested the continuance of the Council at the minor Presidencies, and they now respectfully reiterate their prayers to have them constituted on the precedent of the Council of the island of Ceylon, in which your Petitioners' countrymen have enjoyed seats for a series of years; and, as your Petitioners understand that constitutions have been, or are on the eve of being, granted to the settlements of the Cape of Good Hope and New Zealand, admitting European Colonists, they humbly and anxiously trust, that your Right Honourable House will not deem the barbarians of the former, and the cannibals of the latter colony more deserving or more fitting to be entrusted with a share in the management of their own affairs, than the inhabitants of a country which, for scores of centuries, has been renowned throughout the world for its civilization, literature and commerce, and which had its own sovereigns, governments and codes of law long before the English nation had a name in history.

"That while your Petitioners acknowledge, and have asked for, the advantage of a reconstruction and improvement of the home and local administration of India, yet that alone will be of no avail to redress the grievances and reform the abuses of the local governments, so long as they are composed of two or three Company's officials legislating in the utmost secrecy, and concealing with the most

assiduous carefulness the whole of their transactions; secure not only from all check, but from the least shadow of knowledge on the part of the people, whose interests are unfortunately considered of not the slightest consequence to the Government, whose duty it is to legislate for their sole benefits.

"That your Petitioners will consider themselves and their community deeply humiliated and deeply aggrieved if, after the open acknowledgement of persons high in office in this country and in England, that they are as capable to hold responsible employments as the members of now exclusive civil service; that they are their equals on the bench, and successful competitors in the study of European arts, science and literature; they are shut out from the offices for which they are confessedly qualified, while the savage Hottentot and New Zealander are preferred before them.

"That your Petitioners finally conclude with the expression of their earnest hope and prayer, that sufficient time may be granted for a thorough inquiry into all points affecting the welfare of this country, as distributed under the eight heads laid down by the Committee of your Right Honourable House; that the local Councils may be retained, and modelled upon the constitutional principle before adverted to; and that a Royal Commission, composed of Europeans and Natives conjointly, chosen partly in Europe and partly in India, may be issued to enter upon and complete the necessary investigation in this country."

Apart from a very lucid statement of the grievances felt by the people in respect of British administration, the petitions of Madras Native Association throw a great deal of light on the progress of political ideas in Madras. They are specially valuable as we have very little information on this subject from any other source.

A similar petition was sent by the members of the British Indian Association and other native inhabitants of the Bengal Presidency in 1852 The following extracts from this petition would give some idea of the grievances felt by the people and remedies suggested by them:

10.[149a] That the union of political or executive power with the legislative is not only anomalous in itself, but pregnant with injury to the interest of the people.......... Your petitioners therefore submit that the Legislature of India should be a body not only distinct from the persons in whom the political and executive powers are vested, but also possessing a popular character so as in some respects to represent the sentiments of the people and to be so looked upon by them.

11. That it is a most unprecedented circumstance that though the natives of India have, for the best part of a century, been subjects of the Crown of Great Britain, they have not, to this day, been admitted to the smallest share in the administration of the affairs of their country, but have continued under a Government that unites in itself the legislative and executive functions, and avails itself of those powers to make such laws as may subserve its own financial

purposes, often without reference to the interests and wishes of the people.

12. That not only are laws enacted without reference to the people, but they are enforced against the strongest complaints and remonstrances (reference is made to the Regulation III of 1828 which made a Collector also the Judge in cases of resumption of lands).

13. Your petitioners refer to the Act XXI of 1850, which, under the guise of extending the principle of section 9, Regulation VII of 1832 of the Bengal Code, to the other presidencies, the provisions of which had never come into operation, alters the rules of inheritance of the people of this country, which are well known to be based upon their religious tenets, by allowing persons excluded from caste, whether on account of immoral or infamous conduct, or of change of religion, to inherit, contrary to the express rules of the Hindoo law. On learning the intentions of the Government, many of the people of Bengal and Madras united to remonstrate against it, on the ground of the guarantee given them that their laws and customs should be respected, and of its being the tendency if not the design of the intended law to facilitate proselytism to other religions. But these remonstrances were not even noticed by the Government.

14. That for these and other reasons too numerous to be detailed, your petitioners consider the power of making laws and raising taxes conferred exclusively on the Governor-General in Council as impolitic as well as unjust to the native subjects of the British Crown...... .. Hence they are desirous that the legislature of British India be placed on the footing of those enjoyed by most of the Colonies of Her Majesty,..... .. They accordingly submit for the consideration of your Right Honourable House the propriety of constituting a Legislative Council at Calcutta, composed of 17 members, three selected from amongst the most respectable and qualified native inhabitants of each presidency, to represent the natives thereof (*details of the composition and powers of the Council follow*).

20. That there should be a reduction of the salaries of the higher offices, and that the saving thereby effected should, in part, be applied to the increase of the allowances of the lower, which are confessedly inadequate to their duties and responsibilities . .. The salaries of the Governor-General, the Members of Council, the local Governors, and the principal covenanted officers, are on an exorbitant scale, and susceptible of great reduction without impairing the efficiency of the service...... Much public treasure is also expended, without any corresponding advantage, in paying extravagant salaries to the Resi-

dents in the courts of the Princes of India and other political officers, and to a large staff of assistants....

26. The Magistrates act in the double capacity of superintendents of police and judges of cases not liable to a sentence exceeding three years' imprisonment. In the former capacity they have been acknowledged by their superiors to have a strong leaning towards the conviction of those who are brought before them for trial. In the latter capacity they are authorised, in certain cases, even to adjudge imprisonment and fine without appeal, and in general they exercise, according to the admissions of high authorities, powers which are not committed to magistrates in any civilized country, and for which they are disqualified by their youth and inexperience.

31. That the monopoly of the salt trade by the Company injuriously affects the poor,......The selling price of salt is arbitrarily fixed by the Government, and is at all times so high that, though the country has abundant resources for the manufacture of the article, English merchants can afford to import it......But as salt is a necessary of life, the duty on salt should be entirely taken off as soon as possible......The monopoly of opium trade is a source of vexation to the cultivators, who are compelled to cultivate the poppy, and supply the produce to the Government, at the valuation fixed by their own officers. Nor can it be otherwise than that the cultivators should be at a disadvantage, and be liable to oppression, when the other contracting party is armed with all the power and resources of the state. Justice, therefore, requires that the interference of the Government with the cultivation should cease,......By the adoption of this principle, the cultivators will possess that freedom of action which all men possess under governments that are not constituted on arbitrary and despotic principles;......

32. That the abkaree duties, or revenue raised from the sale of spirituous liquors and intoxicating drugs, and the stamp duties, levied by obliging litigants and complainants to write their petitions on stamped papers, are highly objectionable in principle.......

36. That the provisions for an ecclesiastical establishment expressly for the advantage of British subjects are out of place among the arrangements for the government of British India. That government is for a mixed community the members of which are of various and opposite sects, and the majority is composed of Hindus and Mahomedans......Your petitioners do not object to the appointment of chaplains to the European regiments that are sent out to this country,......but to support of bishops and other highly paid functionaries, out of the general revenues of the country, for the benefit of a small body of British subjects".[150]

Liberal-minded Englishmen also joined with the Indians in condemning various aspects of the administrative system of British India. This may be best shown by quoting extracts from the writings of three highly placed Englishmen, who had intimate and personal knowledge of Indian affairs, and cannot be suspected of having any grudge or bias against the British administration. The first discusses the general principle and practice of British-Indian administration, while the other two make a comparative estimate of the British administration and the one superseded by it.

Frederick John Shore, one of the best British administrators in the thirties, observes as follows:

"More than seventeen years have elapsed since I first landed in this country; but on my arrival and during my residence of about a year in Calcutta, I well recollect the quiet, comfortable, and settled conviction, which in those days existed in the minds of the English population, of the blessings conferred on the natives of India by the establishment of the English rule Our superiority to the Native Governments which we have supplanted, the excellent system for the administration of justice which we had introduced; our moderation; our anxiety to benefit the people—in short, our virtues of every description were descanted on as so many established truths which it was heresy to controvert. Occasionally I remember to have heard some hints and assertions of a contrary nature from some one who had spent many years in the interior of the country, but the storm which was immediately raised and thundered on the head of the unfortunate individual who should presume to question the established creed was almost sufficient to appal the boldest

"I was thus gradually led to an inquiry into the principles and practices of British-Indian administration Proceeding in this, I soon found myself at no loss to understand the feelings of the people both towards the Government and to ourselves It would have been astonishing indeed had it been otherwise. The fundamental principle of the English had been to make the whole Indian nation subservient, in every possible way, to the interests and benefits of themselves They have been taxed to the utmost limits, every successive Province, as it has fallen into our possession, has been made a field for higher exaction; and it has always been our boast how greatly we have raised the revenue above that which the native rulers were able to extort The Indians have been excluded from every honour, dignity, or office which the lowest Englishman could be prevailed upon to accept"

Emphasizing the drain of wealth from India, Shore remarks: "The halcyon days of India are over; she has been drained of a large proportion of the wealth she once possessed; and her energies have been cramped by a sordid system of misrule to which the interests of millions have been sacrificed for the benefit of the few".[161]

The other two are Sir Thomas Munro and Sir John Malcolm, two of the most distinguished British officials in India who rank with Elphinstone as builders of the British Empire. Here is an extract from Munro's Minute recorded on 31 December, 1824.

"If we make a summary comparison of the advantages and disadvantages which have occurred to the natives from our Government, the result, I fear, will hardly be so much in its favour as it ought to have been. They are more secure from the calamities both of foreign war and internal commotions; their persons and property are more secure from violence; they cannot be wantonly punished or their property seized by persons in power; and their taxation is, on the whole, lighter. But, on the other hand, they have no share in making laws for themselves, little in administering them, except in very subordinate offices; they can rise to no high station, civil or military; they are everywhere regarded as an inferior race, and often rather as vassals or servants than as the ancient owners and masters of the country.

"It is not enough that we confer on the natives the benefits of just laws and of moderate taxation, unless we endeavour to raise their character; but under a foreign government there are so many causes which tend to depress it that it is not easy to prevent it from sinking It is an old observation that he who loses his liberty loses half his virtue This is true of nations as well as of individuals. To have no property scarcely degrades more in the one case than in the other to have property at the disposal of a foreign government in which we have no share. The enslaved nation loses the privileges of a nation as the slave does those of a free man; it loses the privileges of taxing itself, of making its own laws, of having any share in their administration, or in the general government of the country. British India has none of these privileges....

"One of the greatest disadvantages of our Government in India is its tendency to lower or destroy the higher ranks of society, to bring them all too much to one level, and by depriving them of their former weight and influence to render them less useful instruments in the internal administration of the country. The native governments had a class of richer gentry composed of Jageerdars and Enamdars and of all the higher civil and military officers. These, with the principal merchants and Ryots, formed a large body, wealthy or at least easy in their circumstances. The Jagheers and Enams of one prince were often resumed by another, and the civil and military officers were liable to frequent removal, but as they were replaced by others, and as new Jagheers and Enams were granted to new claimants, these changes had the effect of continually throwing into the country a supply of men whose wealth enabled them to encourage its cultivation and manufactories. These advantages have almost entirely ceased under our Government. All the civil and military offices of any importance are now held by Europeans, whose savings go to their own country".[152]

The following is an extract from the evidence given by Sir John Malcolm before the Select Committee of the House of Commons in 1832.

Question. "In your opinion, was the substitution of our government for the misrule of the native princes the cause of greater prosperity to the agricultural and commercial part of the population?"

Answer. "I cannot answer this in every Province of India, but I shall as far as my experience enables me. I do not think the change has benefited, or could benefit, either the commercial, the monied, or the agricultural classes of many of the native States, though it may be of others. It has not happened to me ever to see countries better cultivated, and so abounding in all produce of the soil, as well as commercial wealth, than the Southern Mahratta Districts, when I accompanied the present Duke of Wellington to that country in the year 1803; I particularly here allude to those large tracts near the borders of the Krishna

Poona, the capital of Peshwa, was a very wealthy and thriving commercial town, and there was as much cultivation in the Deccan as it was possible so arid and unfruitful a country could admit....

"With respect to Malwa....I had ample means afforded me, as the person appointed to occupy that territory and to conduct its civil, military, and political administration, to learn all that the records of the Government could teach, and to obtain from other sources full information of this country; and I certainly entered upon my duties with the complete conviction that commerce would be unknown, and that credit could not exist....I found, to my surprise, that in correspondence with the first commercial and monied men of Rajputana, Bundelkhand, and Hindustan (Northen India), as well as with those of Gujrat, dealings in money to a large amount had continuously taken place at Ujjain and other cities, where Soucars or bankers of character and credit were in a flourishing state, and that goods to a great amount had not only continuously passed through the Province, but that the insurance offices which exist throughout all that part of India, and include the principal monied men, had never stopped their operations, though premiums rose at a period of danger to a high amount....And I do not believe that in that country the introduction of our direct rule could have contributed more, nor indeed so much, to the prosperity of the commercial and agricultural interests as the establishment of the efficient rule of its former princes and chiefs....

"With respect to the Southern Mahratta Districts, of whose prosperity I have before spoken....I must unhesitatingly state that the provinces belonging to the family of Putwarden and some other chiefs on the banks of the Krishna present a greater agricultural and commercial prosperity than almost any I know in India. I refer this to the system of administration, which, though there may be at periods exactions, is on the whole mild and paternal; to few changes; to the complete knowledge and almost devotion of Hindus to all agricultural pursuits; to their better understanding, or at least better practice than us in many parts of the administration, particularly in raising towns and villages to prosperity; from the encouragement given to monied men and to the introduction of capital; and above all to the Jaegirdars residing on their estates, and those Provinces being administered by men of rank who live and die on the soil, and are usually succeeded in office by their sons or near relatives. If these men exact money at times in an arbitrary manner, all their expenditure as well as all they receive is limited to their own provinces. but above all causes which promote prosperity is the invariable support given to the village and other native institutions, and to the employment, far beyond what our system admits, of all classes of the population".[153]

To these observations we may add those of George Thompson, an Englishman who visited India in 1843. The following extracts are taken from his speeches, which were published together in the form of a book, entitled *"George Thompson's Lectures on British India"*.[153a]

I. It is notorious, however, that the Parliament, like the East India proprietory, have failed in their duty to their possessions in the East. So far from being impressed with a sense of their value and importance, our legislators have appeared to regard them as almost below their serious notice. The experience of more than fifty years has shown, that the most insignificant topic of a local, temporary, or personal character, has a better chance of securing the attention and consideration of the legislature, than the condition and claims of a dominion as extensive as Europe, with a population comprising a sixth part of the inhabitants

of the globe. The very best informed on Parliamentary matters are perfectly aware that this is the painful fact.

If, then, we find this mighty empire at present neglected alike by the East India Company and the Parliament, what shall be done? Shall we abandon to their fate scores of millions of our fellow subjects? Shall we leave a people ignorant of their political rights, and helpless because ignorant, the prey of insatiate tax gatherers, the victims of every experiment which their rulers may choose to make, to ascertain how far and how long they may extract wealth from a beggared people, in defiance of every principle of good government, and every law of the living God? Are we at liberty to turn a deaf ear to the piercing cry of distress wafted to us from the plains of Hindostan? (p. 25).

II. The condition of India!—Look at the circumstances of the people, impoverished almost to the lowest possible degree. The ranks of society, as nearly as can be, levelled. Princes deposed—nobles degraded—landed proprietors annihilated—the middle classes absorbed—the cultivators ruined—great cities turned into farm villages—villages deserted and in ruins—mendicancy, gang robbery, and rebellion increasing in every direction. This is no exaggerated picture. This is the state and the present state of India. Some of the finest tracts of land have been forsaken, and given up to the untamed beasts of the jungle. The motives to industry have been destroyed. The soil seems to lie under a curse. Instead of yielding abundance for the wants of its own population, and the inhabitants of other regions, it does not keep in existence its own children. It becomes the burying place of millions, who die upon its bosom, crying for bread. In proof of this, turn your eyes backward upon the scenes of the past year. Go with me into the north-western provinces of the Bengal presidency, and I will show you the bleaching skeletons of five hundred thousand human beings, who perished of hunger in the space of a few short months: yes, died of hunger in what has been justly called the granary of the world! Bear with me, if I speak of the scenes which were exhibited during the prevalence of this famine. The air for miles was poisoned by the effluvia emitted from the putrefying bodies of the dead. The rivers were choked with the corpses thrown into their channels. Mothers cast their little ones beneath the rolling waves, because they would not see them draw their last gasp, and feel them stiffen in their arms. The English in the city were prevented from taking their customary evening drives. Jackals and vultures approached, and fastened upon the bodies of men, women, and children, before life was extinct. Madness, disease, despair, stalked abroad, and no human power present to arrest their progress. *It was the carnival of death!* And this occurred in British India—in the reign of Victoria the First! Nor was the event extraordinary and unforeseen. Far from it: 1835-36 witnessed a famine in the northern provinces: 1833 beheld one to the eastward. 1822-23 saw one in the Deccan. They have continued to increase in frequency and extent under our sway for more than half a century. Under the administration of Lord Clive, a famine in Bengal provinces swept off three millions; and at that time the British speculators in India had their granaries filled to repletion with corn. Horried monopoly of the necessaries of life! Thus three millions died while there was food enough, and to spare, locked up in the storehouses of the rich! (p. 27).

III. To add to the horror with which we are called to regard the last dreadful carnage, we are made acquainted by the returns of the custom-houses with the fact, that as much grain was exported from the lower parts of Bengal as would have fed the number who perished—(half a million)—for a whole year! (p. 28)

IV. Do you ask, why this wholesale destruction of human life? I reply, and while I do so, I am fully aware of the nature of the accusation I bring against

the government of India, at home and abroad, and am ready to sustain it—because the people have been virtually robbed of their soil—deprived of the fruits of their industry—prevented from accumulating the means of meeting a *period of drought*, and are thus doomed to death, should the earth refuse, for a single season, to yield its increase. Our government (says one of the highest authorities) has been practically one of the most extortionate and oppressive that ever existed; and a committee of the House of Commons has declared that our revenue system in India is one of habitual extortion and injustice, leaving nothing to the cultivator but what he is able to secure by *evasion and fraud*. Can any evidence be required more conclusive, in proof of the ruinous nature of our administration, than is furnished by the fact, that famines are becoming almost general, and that they are sweeping off their victims by hundreds of thousands—and that these famines occur in the most fertile districts of the globe, and during a period of profound internal peace? The master evil of the present system in India is the *land-tax*. The government has made itself *de facto the universal landlord*—has assumed the right to tax the soil to any extent—has fixed an assumed capability on every field of produce—then, an assumed price on the produce of the field—and then fixed that from thirty-five to forty-five per cent. of the money value of the crop, shall be the tax to the state for ever—*and, if the cultivator should lay out his money in the improvement, in any way, of the land under his management*, the government claims the right of making a new assessment, in proportion to the assumed increased value of the crop.

The results of this system have appeared in a thousand afflicting forms Rural industry has been crushed—enterprise has been rendered profitless—cult[illegible]ated lands, over-burthened by taxation, have been abandoned—the revenue has d[illegible]d—the prosperity of the country has been undermined at its foundation—pr[illegible]ty has gone on deteriorating, until estates have been sold for less than the amount of one year's taxes Mr Rickards informs us that the land-owners of Malabar offered their estates to the government, on condition of their receiving a bare subsistence of rice and curry in return. If the principle of taxation has been bad, the mode adopted in collecting it has been no better Mr Fullerton, when a member of the council at Madras, thus described it —

"Imagine (says he) the revenue leviable *through the agency of one hundred thousand revenue officers*, collected or remitted at their discretion, according to the occupant's means of paying, whether from the produce of his land, or his separate property and, in order to encourage every man to act as a spy on his neighbour, and report his means of paying, that he may eventually save himself from extra demand imagine *all the cultivators of a village liable at all times to a separate demand*, in order to make up for the failure of one or more individuals of the parish Imagine collectors to every county, acting under the orders of a board, on the avowed principle of destroying all competition for labour by a general equalization of assessment, *seizing and sending back runaways to each other*. And lastly, imagine *the collector the sole magistrate or justice of the peace of the county*, through the medium and instrumentality of whom alone any criminal complaint of personal grievance suffered by the subject can reach the superior courts Imagine at the same time, *every subordinate officer employed in the collection of the land revenue, to be a police officer, vested with the power to* FINE, CONFINE, PUT IN THE STOCKS, AND FLOG any inhabitant within his range, on any charge, without oath of the accuser, or sworn recorded evidence in the case." (pp 29-30)

No impartial historian will possibly deny the truth of these observations. If the four Englishmen have erred, they have done

so on the side of moderation. On a broad review of the first century of British rule in India, the first thing that compels attention is the wretched poverty and distress to which the people were reduced by the ruin of industry and oppressive land-tax, for both of which the British Government must be held directly responsible. The two great blessings of the British rule, namely, the improvement of knowledge on western lines, and the establishment of a good system of administration guaranteeing security of life and property, were not yet fully in evidence. The new system of higher education was as yet confined to a handful of persons, while the indigenous system was visibly declining. So far as the administrative system was concerned, it was a period of experiment, useful in itself, but as yet producing no very satisfactory results. There was security against foreign aggression, but not against theft, robbery, and crimes and oppressions of other kind. The law-courts had not yet become efficient instruments of impartial justice, while the Police served as agencies of oppression rather than protection. The prison house was as wretched as it could be "and the District Magistrate was determined that the prison should be a distinctly uncomfortable place", while the Medical officer made an equally determined but unsuccessful effort to keep down the terrible death rate in jails.[154] So far as the amenities of life were concerned, they are summed up in two sentences by Sir John Strachey while describing the condition in Bengal in 1854, i.e. after a continuous British rule for nearly a century: "There were almost no roads, or bridges or schools, and there was no protection to life or property. The police was worthless, and robberies and violent crimes by gangs of armed men, which were unheard of in other provinces, were common not far from Calcutta.[155]

All the while the Indians were mere passive onlookers,—they had no place or power in the administration of their own country. The curse of slavery with all the attendant evils, so pithily described by Munro, was exercising a ruinous and degenerating influence upon the character of the people at large. The early dreams and enthusiastic hopes of the small band of English-educated Indians were giving place to disillusion and despair, while the common people, full of discontent and disaffection, bided their time in sullen resentment, marked by occasional outburst of violence. By the time the British completed the first hundred years of their rule, they gained the whole of India, but lost their hold upon the hearts of the Indians. The Government were fully aware of this and made full allowance for this important factor in devising plans for the safety of their Indian Empire.[156]

1. Speech of Morley on 23 February, 1909 (Keith, II. 95).
2. Clause IV.

3. *ICND*, 86-7.
4. For the text of Macaulay's speech, Cf. Keith, I, 226 ff.
5. *ICND*, 96-7.
6. Clause 20.
7. See p 3.
8. *CHI*, VI. 14.
9. Ibid, 2.
9a. Strachey, *India, its Administration and Progress*, (2nd Ed.), p 112
10. Ibid, 121.
11. Dodwell, H, *A Sketch of the History of India*, 45-6.
12 Ibid, 49
13. Clause 52 of the Charter Act of 1833.
14. Clause 69.
15. The combination of the two offices was strongly criticized in *CR*, VI, (1846). p. 149
16. Preamble to the Regulation (Cowell, 163)
17 *CHI*, VI. 41.
18. Campbell, G, *Modern India*, pp. 238-42.
19. *CHI*, VI. 42
20. *CHI*, VI. 43.
21. *Report of the Select Committee on the affairs of the East India Company*, 1832, pp. 122-4.
22 *CHI*, VI 66
23 *CHI*, VI 73.
24. "When the territories of Sagor and Narbada came under British rule in 1818, they were first placed directly under the rule of the Indian Government, and were subsequently placed under the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces In 1842 they were under an Agent directly under the Government of India, and on a later date they were once more transferred to the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces." And this state of things continued till 1861 when they were included in the Central Provinces (Dutt-II, 291-2).
25 *Lahore Administration Report*, 1852, quoted in Dutt-II, 82-3
26. See p. 289.
27. M Innes, *Henry Lawrence, the Pacificator*, Introduction (quoted in Dutt-II, 88).
28 *THG*, 347
29. Macaulay's speech in the House of Commons, June, 1853 (quoted in *CHI*, VI. 358).
30 From the Governor-General in Council to the Court of Directors, 9 July, 1800.
31 Speech in the House of Commons, June, 1853 (quoted in *CHI*, VI. 358).
32. Macaulay's speech in the House of Commons on 10 July, 1833 (Keith I, 264-5).
33 *ICND*, 96.
34 Dispatch, 10 December, 1834 (quoted in *CHI*, VI. 10).
35 *CHI*, VI 10.
36. Dispatch, 10 December, 1834 (quoted in *CHI*, VI. 7).
37. Clause 66
38. Clauses 43 and 46.
39 Clause 51.
40 Clause 44.
41. Clause 45.
42 *Montford Report*, para 58.
43. Ramsay Macdonald, *The Government of India*, p. 69; for example, the Legislative Council discussed the propriety of the grant to the Mysore princes (Ilbert, 100, f. n, 3).
44 *Montford Report*, para 62.
45. Cowell (5th Ed), 67
46 European British subjects included any subject of His Majesty in U.K. or British colonies, and his son and grandson.
47. Joseph Chailley, *Administrative Problems of British India* (1910), 456-7.
48 Quoted in Strachey, op. cit. pp. 116-7.
49. Chailley, op. cit., 458; Strachey, op. cit., 116-7.
50. B Majumdar, *History of Political Thought*, I. 175.
51 *CR*, VI (1846). 145-6
51a. *A Few Remarks on certain Draft Acts, commonly called Black Acts.*

51b. See Chapter L.
52. *CR*, VI. pp. 135-89.
53. Ibid, 137-8.
54. Ibid, 145. The relevant passage has been quoted on pp. 345-6
55. Ibid, 149.
56. Ibid, 150.
57. Ibid, 150. The Editor observes in a footnote that in exceptional cases the darogah may be elevated to the higher grade of 75 or even 100 Rupees.
58. Ibid, 157-8.
59. Ibid, 186.
60. Ibid, 171-3.
61. Ibid, 175-77.
62. Ibid, 179-82.
63. Ibid, 183.
64. Ibid, 183-4.
65. Ibid, 187-8.
66. Dutt-I. 402-5; II. 212. The amount of gross revenue is given later in this section.
67. Dutt-II. 100.
68. Ibid.
69. *Commons' Fourth Report*, 1853 (quoted in Dutt-II. 144-5).
70. Dutt-II 152
71. *Commons' Fourth Report*, 1853, quoted in Dutt-II. 153.
72. Dutt-II. 157.
73. Extract from the petition of The Madras Native Association to the House of Commons (*Commons' First Report*, 1853, Appendix 7). (Dutt-II. 164-5).
74. Ibid.
75. Ibid.
76. In addition to the reduction of military expenses, by reducing Batta to half which saved £ 20,000 a year, further economies were effected by reduction in the expenses of the land revenue administration, Provincial Courts and costly settlements in the Straits of Malacca (*Bentinck*, R. I., 60).
77. Dutt-II. 212.
78. Cf. Chapters V and VI.
79. Even expenses incurred in connection with the visit of the Sultan of Turkey to London were paid out of the funds of the Government of India.
80. Dutt-II. 216.
81. Ibid, 217.
82. Ibid.
83. Major Wingate, *Our Financial Relations with India* (quoted in Dutt-II, 218-9).
84. Dutt-II. 213.
84a. B. Majumdar, 71-2.
85. Wingate, op. cit. (Dutt-II. 213-4).
86. Montgomery Martin. *Eastern India*. Introduction (Dutt-I, 409-10)
87. See Vol. VIII.
88. Quoted in Dutt-II. 42-3.
89. Dutt-II. 43.
90. Elphinstone's Report, dated 25 October, 1819 (quoted in Dutt-II. 50-1).
91. Ibid.
92. Quoted in Dutt-II. 52.
93. Evidence of Goldfinch. *Fourth Report of the Commons' Select Committee*, 1853. p. 141 (Dutt-II. 53).
94. Dutt-II. 61.
95. Ibid, 57.
96. Ibid, 68.
97. Ibid, 69.
98. Ibid.
99. Ibid, 69-70.
100. Ibid, 71-2.
101. G. Campbell, *Modern India* (London, 1852) (Dutt-II. 73).
102. Dutt-II. 74. Italics mine.
103. Report of the Commission, dated 16 April, 1855 (Dutt-II. 74).
104. Ibid.
105. Dutt-II. 75
106. Ibid. 76.

107. B. Smollett, *Madras, its Civil Administration* (London, 1858) (Dutt-II. 77).
108. Quoted in Dutt-II. 79-80.
109. *Punjab Administration Report*, 1852, quoted in Dutt-II. 90-1.
110. Lady Hope, *General Sir Arthur Cotton, His Life and Work*, p. 278.
111. SB-I, 28-9.
112. Ibid, 29.
112a. *Rammohun Roy*, p. 84.
112b. Ibid, 85-6.
113. *Sel. Cal. Gaz.*, 211. See above, pp. 350-51.
114. Ibid. 529.
115. Ibid, 530.
116. Ibid, 531-2.
117. *CR*, VI (1846). 154.
118. *Sel. Cal. Gaz.*, 57.
119. Ibid, 448.
120. Vol. II. 210, 213. The manuscript of this book was completed in 1839, and it was published in 1844.
121. The rates were lower in some Provinces.
122. Quoted in Buckland, *Bengal Under the Lieutenant-Governors*, I. 23.
123. Ibid, 25.
124. Ibid, 26. Cf the extracts quoted on p. 377 and F. J. Shore, *Notes on Indian History*, pp. 378 ff
125. Buckland, 26-7.
126. See p. 368.
126a. *CR*, Vol. XXXV (1860). p. 374.
127. For a detailed account of the beliefs and practices of the *thugs*, cf W. H. Sleeman, *Report on the depredations committed by the Thugs* (1840), Meadows Taylor, *Confessions of a Thug*. W. H. Sleeman, *Rambles and Recollections of an Indian official*, Ch. XIII (also Appendix, p 650) *Sel. Cal. Gaz.*, 581-87.

Many erroneous impressions are current about the *thugs*. These have been critically discussed by Dr H Gupta (*JIH* XXXVII. 167 ff).

128. *CHI*, VI. 33 The view that the *thugs* formed a guild is a gratuitous assump-
tion for which there is no evidence. There is much less excuse for holding
that *thugi* is a system 'expressly enjoined by Hinduism', or that it has always
been 'a feature of Indian life', and a social order—caste—or religious fraternity
whose members were bound together by religious vows. The *thugs* carried
on their criminal activities over a wide area, but there is no evidence to
show "that they had any central or even regional organizations hierarchically
formed and knit together or having affiliations with one another". They
belonged to various communities, and normally the different gangs worked in
separate groups, only in special cases, involving great hazard, two or more
units would work together There can be therefore no question of a religious
fraternity or social order. The profession of the *thugs* on a large scale may
be justly regarded as the natural consequence of the anarchy and confusion
prevailing in the eighteenth century, the loss of occupation by people with
military instincts by the annexation of native States by the British, and
above all, the failure of the British and other ruling powers to establish
an efficient administration in the nineteenth century. The suppression of
the Pindaris had an obvious effect upon the growth of this kind of highway
robbery. Poverty and destitution were the real and proximate causes of
the origin and growth of the *thugi*, and there is no warrant for the assump-
tion that "the religious element was stronger and the element of gain was
less" in prompting a person to take to the profession of a *thug*. The question
has been fully discussed by Dr. Gupta in *JIH*, XXXVII, 188 ff. Dr. Gupta
is not, however, right in assuming that the *thugi* was a product of the
British period. It can be traced as far back as the end of the thirteenth century
A.D According to Ziyā-ud-dīn Baranī about one thousand *thugs* were
captured by Jalal-ud-dīn Khaljī (A.D 1290-96). V.A. Smith wrongly refers
this event to the reign of Fīrūz Tughluq (A.D. 1351-88) in an appendix to
his edition of Sleeman's *Rambles and Recollections of an Indian Official*,
p 652 There is, however, no evidence that the evil at any time reached such
enormous proportions as it did in the nineteenth century A.D. and 'for cen-
turies oppressed the people' as Sleeman says.

129. *Sel Cal Gaz.* 360.

130. *CHI*, VI. 34-5.
131. *CR*, VI (1846), 475.
132. *Imp. Gaz.*, IV. 398. But F. J. Shore takes a different view (*Notes on Indian Affairs*, I. p 371) He thinks that the prisoners were better off than the masses outside jail.
133. *CHI*, VI. 56.
134. *Imp. Gaz.*, IV. 398 ff.
135. *CHI*, VI 274.
136. Ibid, 32.
137. Shore, op. cit. 177.
138. *CHI*, VI. 32.
139. *Sel. Cal. Gaz.*, 155.
140. Ibid, 278-9.
141. Ibid. 305.
142. Ibid, 521.
143. Ibid, 537.
144. See pp. 374-5.
145. *Works*, p 874. Quoted in B. Majumdar, 47.
146. See pp 359, 374.
147. B. Majumdar. 37-41.
148. Ibid, 49-54.
149 *Rammohun Roy*, 87.
149a. These figures refer to the number of paragraphs.
150. The petitions are printed in the Reports of the Select Committee of the British Parliament, session, 1852-3. The petition of the British Indian Association, printed as a pamphlet, is available in the National Library (Catalogue No 169 A 73) Extracts from it are given in B. Majumdar, 474-89
151. F. J. Shore, op cit, II. 28, 516.
152. Dutt-I. 165-6.
153. Ibid, 415-7
153a. Further particulars about George Thompson will be given in Book III, Chapter L.
154. *Mayo* (R I), 187.
155. *CHI*, VI. 32
156. Minutes of Bentinck, dated 13 March, 1835. Among the internal evils, of which the Government should take due note in making preparations for defence, Bentinck not only included disaffection of the public but also their higher elevation of character, knowledge, improved morality, courage and other noble qualities. In his opinion the spread of knowledge and the operation of the press in India weaken the respect of the Indians for European character and prestige for British supremacy (*Bentinck*, RI, p. 179).

CHAPTER XIII.

DISCONTENT AND DISAFFECTION

The readers of the British period of Indian history are familiar with the phrase *Pax Britannica*—a new era of peace, prosperity and contentment, introduced by the British rule, such as India had never known before. This claim is, however, only partially true, so far at least as the first half of the nineteenth century is concerned. There was, no doubt, an end of the state of anarchy, chaos, and confusion which set in after the decline of the Mughul Empire, but a long time was to elapse before peace reigned supreme in India. There were frequent sporadic outbursts, often leading to serious armed resistance against the British authority, throughout India, and these culminated in the great upsurge of 1857 which shook the British empire in India to its very foundation. This was partly a legacy of the period that had just been ended, but was also largely due to grave discontent which was a direct consequence of the establishment of British rule in India. This fact has not, so far, been adequately recognized by historians of British India, and therefore requires a somewhat detailed treatment.

For the sake of convenience we may classify the discontent under separate heads, according to the sources giving rise to it, though, very often, several causes operated together in creating it.

I. POLITICAL

It was almost inevitable that the expansion of British dominions would leave behind a blazing trail of discontent and disaffection throughout India. This was by no means confined to the ruling chiefs and royal families of the countries conquered by the British, or annexed by them on other grounds, and not even to the immediate entourage and dependants of those royal courts. British rule, during the period under review, was not favourably looked upon even by the people at large in any region where it was newly introduced, far less joyously welcome, as many of the British administrators and writers would have us believe. Discontent and disaffection were particularly strong in those regions like Burma, Assam, Coorg, Sindh, the Panjāb, and Avadh which were *unjustly* annexed, at least according to the views of their people. The arbitrary deposition of the ruler of Sātārā,[1] the despotic coercion of the Sindhia,[2] and similar other tyrannical acts generated a feeling of hatred and hostility

against the British which was generally, but not always, confined to the upper strata of society. The Doctrine of Lapse, particularly its practical application by Lord Dalhousie, produced grave discontent in the States directly affected, and created a sense of alarm among the other Indian States. It is against this background that one has to assess the value of those rumours about conspiracies against the British which were widely circulated during the second quarter of the nineteenth century. Some idea of this may be obtained from the long statement made by Sitaram Bawa before H. B. Devereuse, Judicial Commissioner of Mysore, on January 18, 1858, and the following days.[3] According to him a conspiracy against the British was begun by Baiza Bai, widow of Daulat Rao Sindhia, soon after she was expelled from Gwalior about twenty years before (to be more precise in A.D. 1833).[4] Another conspiracy, according to Sitaram Bawa, was set on foot by the ruler of Mysore, along with the rulers of Shorapur, Sātārā, Kolhapur, and some other principalities in order that these (and other) ruling dynasties might recover their kingdoms. The Raja of Mysore, we are told, used to write to his confederates:—"The Mysore Rajah used to tell these people that with the help of God, all would be well (*i. e.* they would be restored to their rule and kingdoms). Such correspondence has been going on for about eight months......The Rajah used to write thus: 'a great army is soon coming this way... ..Bajee Row's son and Holkar and other great princes had all joined together, and that as soon as they advanced all would join, the old dynasties would be restored, and all would be placed on their thrones......"

Some time about 1852, Baiza Bai joined with Nana Sahib and hatched a more comprehensive plot along with the second group, led by the Raja of Mysore. According to Sitaram Bawa, this conspiracy embraced, besides Nana Sahib and Baiza Bai, almost all the native States, and he mentions specifically Holkar, Sindhia, Assam (or Burma), Jaipur, Jodhpur, Kolah Boonder, Jhalawar, Rewah, Baroda; Kutch, Bhooj, Nāgpur, Hyderabad, Shorapur, Kolhapur, Sātārā and Indore. Nana, we are told, wrote to all the native rulers, and all agreed to join the plot except the Raja of Travancore. Nana even approached Ghulab Singh of Jammu and through him also Russia. The former joined and Russia promised that if Nana could take and hold Delhi then assistance would be given to him to drive the English from Calcutta.

According to Sitaram Bawa all this was common knowledge and "every Baboo in Calcutta knew of it". This may be so, but there is no evidence, and no sane man would believe, that there was really any serious conspiracy of this character. But Sitaram's evidence

proves that there were wild, vague and floating rumours about it all over India. The echo of these rumours must have reached the British Government. That is why they held Pratap Singh of Sātārā guilty of conspiracy with other native rulers and the Portuguese of Goa,[5] though there was no evidence in support of it.

Such rumours possibly originated in vague talks and dark hints about conspiracies indulged in by irresponsible men posing as confidential agents. But they would never have been invented, or gained credence, unless the people believed that such a grave discontent prevailed among the native rulers as would have rendered the conspiracies at least probable, though not possible or practicable.

Thus though these rumours were without any real basis in fact, they undoubtedly indicate a wide-spread feeling of dismay and discontent among the native rulers, which was well-known to the people at large.

But the policy of wholesale annexations, which found its most successful exponent in Lord Dalhousie, and culminated in the map of India being all red, if not in theory, at least in practice, did not unnerve the native rulers alone but affected the people as well. The fall of the old and renowned royal houses like those of Peshwa, Bhonsle, Avadh, Jhansi, Panjāb and Sātārā, and the precarious existence of the rest, on mere sufferance of the British, not only gave a rude shock to the sentiments of the people, but cast adrift in the world, hopeless and helpless, a large body of people, both high and low, who had hitherto earned their livelihood by service, both civil and military, in those defunct States. Proud aristocracies were reduced to beggary and servitude, artisans and craftsmen, flourishing upon the luxury of the court and the wealthy, were faced with utter ruin, and old ideas, traditions, and pageants of pomp and glory, so dear to the common people, were rapidly passing away, never to return. There were fear and bewilderment on all sides and a state of uneasy suspense about the future, which was aggravated, rather than allayed, by the new system of administration which replaced the old.

II. ADMINISTRATIVE

Apart from the inherent dislike of a foreign rule, the ill feeling generated by the British administration was due to several factors. In the first place, the people found it very difficult to adjust themselves to the new system which was so radically different from the one to which they were accustomed for centuries. Secondly, it affected the vested interests of classes and individuals who had profited both by the merits as well as the defects of the system of

government replaced by the British. One or two concrete instances will illustrate the point. A large number of pious and learned men, as well as religious and educational institutions, flourished under the patronage of the Indian courts, mainly by the grant of rent-free lands. The Company's system of administration, which was incompatible with the patronage of oriental royal courts, and deliberate resumption of rent-free lands on a massive scale through the Inam Commission ruined a large number of these individuals and institutions,[6] and thereby created a vacuum in the social order which disturbed a much wider circle than that which was directly or immediately affected. Thirdly, the changes and experiments in the land-revenue system brought misery and ruin both upon the landlords and the tenants, who formed the backbone of the country.[7] The cultivators groaned under the inordinately excessive land-rent, and the landlords, where they were allowed to function, were displeased as they were deprived of the effective authority which they were accustomed to exercise for the maintenance of law and order. They were reduced in practice, if not in theory, to the position of mere farmers of revenue, liable to ejectment for default in payment of revenue, and subject to new rules and regulations like sun-set laws with which they were quite unfamiliar. Fourthly, even such salutary practices as the introduction of rule by law, in place of personal rule dictated by whims and caprices, gave rise to discontent. For it involved the principle of equality in the eyes of law and its rigorous enforcement upon all alike—the rich and the poor, the weak and the strong, or the high and the low in social cadre—and was resented by persons claiming a privileged position or preferential treatment which they had hitherto enjoyed. On the other hand, the poorer and the weaker section, to whom the newly established law-courts should have proved a blessing, did not derive much material benefit from them. This was due to the complicated procedure followed by them which was unfamiliar and often unintelligible to the masses, and involved long delay and heavy expenses. The rough and ready method of justice prevalent in the old days was no doubt very unsatisfactory, but it was replaced by a system, which practically denied justice to those very classes who needed it most. Fifthly, the new system of police was highly inefficient and there was a general sense of insecurity of life and property.[8] The old system had vanished but the new system had not yet proved effective.

There were, besides, several characteristic features of British administration which made it highly unpopular. In the first place, the English officials were not accessible to the people, who could not,

therefore, lay their grievances personally before them, as they were accustomed to do before. Secondly, the English system of administration operated like a machine, and the lack of personal element in it was disliked by the people, who attributed to it many evils such as slowness of proceedings, delay in taking action, frequent change of policy etc. Thirdly, the English laws were quite strange and unintelligible to the people. The substitution of English as the court-language in place of Persian was highly disliked, specially by the Muslims.

More important than all these was the exclusion of Indians from all high offices, both in the civil administration and in the army. It was not merely a sore grievance from the point of view of material interest of individuals, but went much deeper than that. Many regarded it as a serious defect in the system of administration by a body of foreign rulers. It was pointed out by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan that the permanence and prosperity of the Government depended on an accurate knowledge of the manners, customs, usages, habits, hopes and aspirations, and temper and ability of the people, but the foreign Government could hardly possess such knowledge as long as the people were not allowed to participate in the administration of the country. The exclusion of Indians from high offices was particularly irritating to the Muslims who had, within living memory, occupied almost all the high posts in the Government and the army.[9]

The repugnance of the British Government to the appointment of Indians to higher offices in India is well illustrated by the case of Rajaram Roy, the adopted son of Raja Rammohan Roy. Rajaram remained in London after his father's death at Bristol in 1833, and was appointed an extra clerk in the offices of the Board of Control. Hobhouse, the President of the Board, hoped that this would have a "beneficial effect on the natives of India generally" by showing them that there was "every disposition on the part of the supreme authority to furnish them with the means and motives of rendering themselves capable of assisting, to a much greater extent than at present, in the administration of India". Urged by the same motive, and impressed by the ability of Rajaram, Hobhouse proposed to nominate Rajaram a writer (corresponding to I. C. S. of later days) in the service of the East India Company. Nothing could be more natural than this, as it was a practical application—the first of its kind—of the principle laid down in the 87th section of the Charter Act of 1833, that no Indian "shall, by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent, colour, or any of them, be disabled from holding any place, office or employment under the East India Company". Nevertheless,

as soon as the news of the proposed appointment began to appear in the Press, there was a flutter in the dovecot at the very idea that the covenanted civil service, hitherto reserved for Europeans, was to be opened to an Indian. The British Bureaucracy was astonished, and Carnac, who originally approved of the idea of Hobhouse, began to waver, and told him that "it will never pass the court". So far one can at least explain, possibly even excuse, though not approve of, the action. What is less intelligible and far less excusable is the disingenuous plea put forward by Lord Auckland, the Governor-General, and accepted by Carnac, that the appointment of Rajaram to this high post would be looked upon with envy by the Indians and that the "feeling amongst the older Indians of Calcutta is far from favourable to such an experiment."[10] Such a reactionary spirit and arrogant racial prejudice, hidden under the cloak of a pretended anxiety for the interests and feelings of the Indians, have been the characteristic features of the British rulers of India throughout the period under review. So far as this aspect of administration was concerned, one might say that the British bureaucracy, like Charles II, never said an unwise word, but never did a wise act, until Lord Curzon pricked the bubble by a frank and open avowal that the Indian Civil Service must remain a British preserve. According to all accounts the deliberate policy of excluding Indians from high offices was keenly resented by all classes of Indians.

This grievance was aggravated by the undisguised contempt with which, as a general rule, the British officials treated the Indians. Sir Syed Ahmad, himself an official and pro-British to a remarkable degree, observes about the British officials that "their pride and arrogance led them to consider the natives of India as undeserving the name of human beings".[11] Such ill treatment, he observes, was "more offensive to Muslims who for centuries past have received special honour and enjoyed special immunities in Hindusthan".[12] Concrete instances of arrogant official attitude will be given in Book III, Chapter XLVII.

Another potent cause of discontent which mainly affected the upper and educated classes was the denial of any political right to the Indians. The first generations of English-educated Indians were enthusiastic about the British rule in the hope that with the progress of education the political status of the Indians would be raised and they would gain their rightful position in the administration of their country. In this they were sadly disappointed. The Indians could not secure a single seat in the Legislative Council or a single appointment in the covenanted service. They also keenly resented the rejection of all their demands for reform in the system of ad-

ministration by removing abuses which were abhorrent or even shocking to their enlightened views. Failure of individual or isolated efforts in this direction led to the growth of political organizations; these reiterated the demands but the British Government held out no hopes of conceding any political reforms to Indians in a liberal spirit. This gradually alienated the sympathy of the intellectual classes, and discontent prevailed among certain sections who refused to hope against hope in the ultimate triumph of the sense of justice and political liberalism of the great English people.

III. ECONOMIC

An indirect consequence of the British rule in India was the economic exploitation of the country. The huge drain of wealth from Bengal, the destruction of its industry, and the gradually increasing land-revenue during the latter half of the eighteenth century have been mentioned above.[13] Bengal could not recover from the effect of these factors. The population was reduced by one-third, and one-third of the province was reduced to "a jungle inhabited only by wild beasts". But it was not the cultivators and artisans of Bengal alone that suffered. The rule of a mercantile company strangled the trade and industry of other parts of India as well, and their cultivators fared as badly or even worse. Armed with the political authority, the British rulers of the early period deliberately fostered the growth of British trade and commerce at the cost of the Indian. This, combined with the impoverishment of the cultivators, brought down one of the richest countries in the whole world to the level of the poorest. It is unnecessary to discuss in the present context how far other external causes were responsible for this sad state of things. For the transformation took place immediately after the establishment of British rule, and the hands of British agency were clearly visible in ruining trade and industry as well as the peasants of India The people, therefore, naturally held the British administration in India alone responsible for the wretched poverty in India, and they had every justification in doing so.

Some of the broad facts, though well known, may be repeated in this connection, for it was a growing knowledge of them that gradually embittered the feelings against the British rule more and more.

It is almost universally admitted, even by the Englishmen, that when "merchant adventurers from the West made their first appearance in India, *the industrial development of this country was at any rate not inferior to that of* the more advanced European

nations".[14] It is no less universally admitted that India is very rich in natural resources, both mineral and agricultural. It is also an admitted fact that the British deliberately crippled Indian trade and manufacture by erecting a high tariff wall in Britain against Indian goods, and encouraging by all means the import of British goods to India.[15]

This was a deliberate policy adopted by the Board of Directors as far back as 1769.[16] In the early nineteenth century the duty on Muslin and Calico was, respectively, more than 27 and 71 P. C. *ad valorem*. Even then, unable to compete with Indian manufactures, Britain prohibited the import of Calico cloths. Heavy protective duties in England—70 and 80 per cent. respectively—on Indian silk and cotton goods ruined those industries, while British goods were imported into India at a nominal duty. The British historian of India, Wilson, observes: "It was stated in evidence (in 1813) that the cotton and silk goods of India up to the period could be sold for a profit in the British markets at a price from 50 to 60 per cent. lower than those fabricated in England. It consequently became necessary to protect the latter by duties of 70 and 80 per cent. on their value, or by positive prohibition. Had this not been the case, had not such prohibitory duties and decrees existed, the mills of Paisley and Manchester would have been stopped in their outset, and could scarcely have been again set in motion, even by the power of steam. They were created by the sacrifice of the Indian manufacture."[17] This process continued throughout the period under review. "In the Parliamentary enquiry of 1840 it was reported that while British cotton and silk goods imported into India paid a duty of 3½ per cent. and woollen goods 2 per cent, Indian cotton goods imported into Britain paid 10 per cent, silk goods 20 per cent and woollen goods 30 per cent".[18] The result was that by the middle of the nineteenth century Indian exports of cotton and silk goods practically ceased.

In 1832 R. M. Martin observed: "By increase of export of cotton goods to India from Britain many millions of Indo-British subjects have been totally ruined".[19] When British goods flooded Indian market, and threatened wholesale destruction of Indian manufactures, the trading company which ruled India did not take any step to prevent the catastrophe. As several Englishmen have pointed out, "free trade and refusal to levy protective duties against machine-made goods of Britain ruined Indian manufacturers."[20] A few concrete instances will explain the seriousness of the resulting situation.

"From 1818 to 1836 the export of twist from Great Britain to India rose in the proportion of 1 to 5,200. In 1824 the export of British muslins to India hardly amounted to 6,000,000 yards, while in

1837 it surpassed 64,000,000 yards. But at the same time population of Dacca decreased from 150,000 inhabitants to 20,000. This decline of Indian towns celebrated for their fabrics was by no means the worst consequence. British steam and science uprooted, over the whole surface of Hindustan, the union between agricultural and manufacturing industry".[21]

The English cotton machinery produced an acute effect in India. The Governor-General reported in 1834-5: "The misery hardly finds a parallel in the history of commerce. The bones of the cotton-weavers are bleaching the plains of India."[22] A few statistical figures may be quoted:

"Between 1814 and 1835 British cotton manufactures exported to India rose from less than 1 million yards to over 51 million yards. In the same period Indian cotton piecegoods imported into Britain fell from one and a quarter million pieces to 306,000 pieces, and by 1844 to 63,000 pieces.

"The contrast in values is no less striking Between 1815 and 1832 the value of Indian cotton goods exported fell from £ 1 3 million to below £ 100,000 or a loss of twelve-thirteenths of the trade in seventeen years. In the same period the value of English cotton goods imported into India rose from £ 26,000 to £ 400,000, or an increase of sixteen times By 1850 India, which had for centuries exported cotton goods to the whole world, was importing one-fourth of all British cotton exports.

"The effects of this wholesale destruction of the Indian manufacturing industries on the economy of the country can be imagined. In England the ruin of the old hand-loom weavers was accompanied by the growth of the mahcine industry. But in India the ruin of the millions of artisans and craftsmen was not accompanied by any alternative growth of new forms of industry The old populous manufacturing towns, Dacca, Murshidabad (which Clive had described in 1757 to be "as extensive, populous and rich as the city of London"), Surat and the like, were in a few years rendered desolate under the "pax britannica" with a completeness which no ravages of the most destructive war or foreign conquest could have accomplished. "The population of the town of Dacca has fallen from 150,000 to 30,000 or 40,000," declared Sir Charles Trevelyan to the parliamentary enquiry in 1840, "and the jungle and malaria are fast encroaching upon the town . Dacca, which was the Manchester of India, has fallen off from a very flourishing town to a very poor and small one; the distress there has been very great indeed" "The decay and destruction," reported Montgomery Martin, the early historian of the British Empire, to the same enquiry, "of Surat, of Dacca, of Murshidabad and other places where native manufactures have been carried on, is too painful a fact to dwell upon. I do not consider that it has been in the fair course of trade; I think it has been the power of the stronger exercised over the weaker." "Less than a hundred years ago," wrote Sir Henry Cotton in 1890, "the whole commerce of Dacca was estimated at one crore (ten millions) of rupees, and its population at 200,000 souls. In 1787 the exports of Dacca muslin to England amounted to 30 lakhs (three millions) of rupees; in 1817 they had ceased altogether. The arts of spinning and weaving, which for ages afforded employment to a numerous and industrial population, have now become extinct. Families which were formerly in a state of affluence have been driven to desert the towns and betake themselves to the villages for a livelihood.... .This decadence has

occurred not in Dacca only, but in all districts. Not a year passes in which the Commissioners and District Officers do not bring to the notice of Government that the manufacturing classes in all parts of the country are becoming impoverished."[23]

Similar effect, though to a much less extent, was produced on other industries. The Indian iron-smelting industry was practically stamped out by cheap imported iron and steel within range of the railways, though it carried on a precarious existence in the more remote and inaccessible parts.[24]

The ruin of Indian industry and commerce was followed by another disastrous result: "It was not only the manufacturing towns and centres that were laid waste, and their population driven to crowd and overcrowd the villages; it was above all the basis of the old village economy, the union of agriculture and domestic industry, that received its mortal blow. The millions of ruined artisans and craftsmen, spinners, weavers, potters, tanners, smelters, smiths, alike from the towns and from the villages, had no alternative save to crowd into agriculture. In this way India was forcibly transformed, from being a country of combined agriculture and manufactures, into an agricultural colony of British manufacturing capitalism".[25]

The British policy, henceforth steadily pursued, was to make India the agricultural colony of British capitalism, supplying raw materials and buying manufactured goods. This policy was condemned by a few liberal-minded Britishers. Montgomery Martin said, in the Parliamentary enquiry of 1840: "India is as much a manufacturing country as an agricultural. She is a manufacturing country, her manufactures of various descriptions have existed for ages, and have never been able to be competed with by any nation wherever fair play has been given to them...To reduce her now to an agricultural country would be an injustice to India".[26] But the real voice of Britain was heard in the evidence of a manufacturer, Mr. Cope, in the same enquiry: "I certainly pity the East Indian labourer", declared Mr. Cope, a Macclesfield manufacturer, to the 1840 Parliamentary enquiry, "but at the same time I have a greater feeling for my own family than for the East Indian labourer's family; I think it is wrong to sacrifice the comforts of my family for the sake of the East Indian labourer because his condition happens to be worse than mine." This has been the real voice and real spirit of John Bull throughout his rule over India in spite of sweet and honeyed phrases of a few honest souls or clever diplomats.

The effect of the new policy can best be judged by the following figures:

"Raw cotton exports rose from 9 million pounds weight in 1813 to 32 million in 1833 and 88 million in 1844; sheeps' wool from 3.7

thousand pounds weight in 1833 to 2.7 million in 1844; linseed from 2,100 bushels in 1833 to 237,000 in 1844".[27]

One aspect of this new policy brought incalculable misery upon Indian peasants. This was the result of permitting Englishmen to acquire land and set up as planters in India. By an irony of fate this decision was taken in the very year, 1833, when slavery was abolished in the West Indies. The slave-drivers of that region now settled as planters in India, and the new plantation system was nothing but a thinly veiled slavery. This was particularly noticeable in the Indigo plantation in Bengal and Bihar. The inhuman treatment and persecution of the indigo-cultivators by these planters constitutes one of the blackest and most tragic episodes in the history of British rule in India during the period under review. A wave of horror and indignation passed over Eastern India of which a faint echo may be perceived in the Report of the Indigo Commission of 1860.[27a]

The indigo cultivators' lot was abnormal, but even the general condition of the peasants was positively bad. As has been shown above, the new and changing agrarian systems and exorbitant land revenue impoverished the peasantry to such an extent that they never had the minimum requirements even of food and clothing. The upper classes connected with land also suffered much. The resumption of Inam or rent-free lands on a large scale did equal havoc upon a large section of middle class people. These lands were held as rent-free tenures, for generations, when the present owner was asked to produce his title-deeds which were lacking or missing in most cases. It had begun earlier[27b] but was pursued with relentless severity during the regime of Lord Dalhousie, and reduced to penury a large number of landholders who had believed that long years of possession were more valid than title-deeds. Many of them belonged to "high family, proud of their lineage, proud of their ancestral privileges, who had won what they held by the sword, and had no thought by any other means of maintaining possession".[28] An Act was passed in 1852 setting up the Inam Commission to enquire into the titles of land-owners, and during the five years preceding the Mutiny it confiscated more than twenty thousand estates in the Deccan. The landed gentry and nobility were also seriously hit by the new system of land settlement eliminating all intermediate interests between the Government and the cultivators. The most striking illustration of this is afforded by the *Talukdars* of Avadh, most of whom lost their property. Even where the *Zamindars* were suffered to exist, their lot was not always an enviable one, as has been shown above.

It would thus appear that the *Zamindars* or landed nobility, the middle class, the peasants, artisans, traders and industrialists—in short all classes of people—were hard hit by the new economic policy introduced by the British, and a large number was reduced to abject poverty.

It is hardly any wonder, therefore, that grave discontent and disaffection prevailed all over India, and this was kept alive, rather underlined, by the most visible sign of the wretched condition of the people, namely periodical recurrence of famine. There were no less than seven famines in the first half of the nineteenth century with an estimated total of one and a half million deaths.

IV. SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS

Not only political and economic, but social and religious causes were at work in creating profound discontent among the people. The social exclusiveness of the Englishmen and their haughty and arrogant attitude towards the Indians, both high and low, will be described in detail in Chapter XLVII. One concrete instance will suffice to indicate the general attitude of a section of the Europeans towards the Indians. A magistrate at Agra published a police regulation to the following effect: "Every native, whatever his pretended rank may be, ought to be compelled, under heavy penalties, to salaam all English gentlemen in the streets, and if the native is on horse-back or in a carriage, to dismount and stand in a respectful attitude until the European has passed him". This was the unwritten law all over British India, and even Raja Rammohan Roy of Bengal was insulted for failure to observe this regulation, as will be related later.

But there were yet worse things. The indiscriminate assault on Indians by Englishmen was by no means an uncommon incident; there were serious cases of bodily injury, sometimes culminating in death. In all these cases the offenders escaped with light or no punishment, as they were tried by English jurors and backed up by practically the entire British community, with rare exceptions. The immunity with which the members of the royal race could insult, humiliate, injure and even kill the Indian subjects, was far more galling to the people than their political subjection or even the more material losses they suffered at the hands of the British.

The Englishmen in India formed an exclusive society whose door was barred even against the Indians of the highest class. The Indian intellectual classes, accustomed to free intercourse with Englishmen in their own country, felt this humiliating restriction

all the more keenly. Thus the English-educated Indians were gradually alienated from the Englishmen in India.

But a far more serious cause of discontent was the vague dread, which seized the minds of all classes of people, that the British Government was determined to convert the Indians into Christianity. There was no cause of such fear before 1813, as the Christian missionaries were not allowed to enter into the territories of the East India Company. But the Charter Act of 1813 compelled the Company to permit the Christian missionaries to come out to India under license. Since that date their proselytising activities created a sense of alarm among both the Hindus and Muslims who were specially sensitive in religious matters.

The first alarm was caused by the educational institutions set up by the Christian missionaries. They made no secret of their intention not only to promote the knowledge and understanding of their pupils, but, what was deemed to be still more important, also to save their souls, by making them converts to Christianity which they honestly believed to be the only means of salvation. As far back as 1792 Sir Charles Grant maintained that the most important object of English education was to impart the knowledge of Christian religion; for "thence they would be instructed in the nature and perfection of the one true God".[28a] The open defiance of their old religious faiths, beliefs and practices, sometimes in a sacrilegious manner, by some youths trained in the missionary institutions lent colour to the belief that the missionary colleges were nurseries of conversion to Christianity. Many Englishmen—not missionaries—openly expressed the view that the conversion to Christianity was the inevitable corollary of western education. Far more dreadful in the eyes of the Hindus was the opening of western education for girls, which was regarded as an instrument by which the missionaries could invade their *zenana*, the natural citadel of their orthodoxy. The teaching of Christian doctrines was made compulsory in the girls' schools specially founded by them. That the main object of these missionaries was to use these schools as means of preaching Christianity will be clear from the following passage in the proceedings of one of these schools:—"Some others, now engaged in the degrading and polluting worship of idols, shall be brought to the knowledge of the true God and Jesus Christ".

Referring to the names of girls such as Vishnupriya, Annapurna, Digambari, Golakmani etc. the following observations were made: "What kind of conduct ought we to expect from these poor children, named by their parents after imaginary goddesses, whose adultery,

cruelty and gratification of their passions, as detailed by their own sacred writings, are so abominable?"[29]

The Bible was introduced not only in missionary institutions but also in Government schools and colleges. Some schools, mainly supported by the Government, were actually run by clergymen on a strictly Christian basis. About the *modus operandi* of conversion through these schools, it is sufficient to note that the pupils were asked such questions as "Who is your God? Who is your redeemer?" and the inevitable reply, as a result of regular coaching, was, of course, "Jesus Christ". All the evils and abuses of Hinduism, real and fancied, were painted in the most lurid colour, while the blessings of Christianity were described in glowing phrases, and the salvation offered by it was held out in the most attractive form before the youthful pupils in their most impressionable age. No wonder that the Deputy Inspectors of schools were popularly known as native clergymen. Not only educational institutions, but even public prison houses were used as instruments for conversions to Christianity. Gopi Nath Nandi, a Bengali convert and clergyman, has thus recorded his experience: "The prisoners in the jail were also daily instructed in Christianity and general knowledge by a Christian teacher, and every Sabbath morning the Gospel was preached by me. This privilege was granted by our pious magistrate .....The judge and the magistrate, as well as other gentlemen, took a deep interest in the mission, and helped us with their prayers, good advice, and pecuniary aid. When the number of native converts began to increase, six of them, at the suggestion of the late Honourable Mr. Colvin, became small farmers".[30]

Such activities on the part of the officials of the Government, including Magistrates and Judges, in promoting proselytisation, were highlighted by a new regulation, adopted in 1845. Hitherto each prisoner was permitted to cook his own food. The new regulation laid down that the food for all Hindu prisoners would henceforth be cooked in one place by a Brahman.[31] As different sections, even among the Brahmans, are not permitted by caste-rules to interdine, the new rules meant loss of caste. A contemporary writer has recorded that a Hindu released from prison was tabooed by his family and looked upon as having lost his caste.[32]

Filthy abuses of Hindu gods and goddesses formed the main plank of the public preaching and propaganda of the Christian missionaries. The missionary preaching was rendered more odious to the people by the official assistance rendered to them. Syed Ahmad says that the civil and military officers helped the missionaries. The latter openly preached in mosques and temples and abused other

religions, and because a chaprasi or policeman accompanied them, no one dared object for fear of authorities.[33]

But the missionaries did not rely for their success solely on these abuses or sweet reasonableness of their arguments. It was alleged that not unoften they converted unwary persons by holding out false hopes to them, and did not even refrain from using force in keeping their hold on their victims. A few instances in contemporary records support these allegations. Even the educated and aristocratic sections in Calcutta strongly resented these aggressive methods of proselytisation followed by Christian missionaries in Calcutta. They not only made public complaints against this evil but also took active steps to prevent it. Even early in the nineteenth century there was a strong feeling and also a considerable amount of agitation against what the Hindus regarded as conversion to Christianity by force or fraud, and a memorial was sent by the Hindu community against Christian missionaries as well as highly placed English officials, including a Governor. That such apprehensions were not altogether unfounded are proved by a minute recorded by the Governor of Madras in which he draws attention to the importance of converting the Hindus and Muslims into Christianity.[33a]

It is also proved by a series of letters written and widely distributed by Mr. Edmond. "These letters were addressed generally to the public, but particularly to those holding respectable appointments in the service of the State. The purport of these letters was that as all India obeyed one Government—as all parts of the country kept up constant communication one with the other by means of the electric telegraph,—and as the Railway systems united the different extremes of this great Peninsula, it was necessary that there should be but one religion also, and proper, therefore, that everyone should embrace Christianity".[34]

Its effect is thus described by Syed Ahmad: "These letters so terrified the natives that they were as people struck blind, or from under whose feet the ground had suddenly slipped away. All felt convinced that the hour so long anticipated had at last arrived, and that the servants of the Government first, and then the whole population would have to embrace Christianity. No doubt whatever was entertained as to these letters having been forwarded by the orders of the Government".[35] This suspicion continued, even though the Lieutenant-Governor disavowed any intention to convert the people to Christianity.

An indirect effect of the letter was no less disastrous. It is a mat... of general knowledge that when the railways and telegraphs were first introduced in India, people looked askance at them as inge-

nious devices for breaking the social order and caste-rules, and thus prepare the way for mass conversion to Christianity. In the case of railways, where people of all classes and castes—high-caste Brahmans as well as untouchables—had to sit together, and it was not possible to observe proper rules about bath and food, the intention of the *Mlechchha* rulers was quite obvious to the credulous Hindus! The connection of telegraphs with loss of caste was more difficult to divine. Mr. Edmond's philosophic interpretation of the ultimate end of Railway and Telegraph came in very handy, as a confirmation of the worst suspicions of the people.

It is only by taking note of this cloud of suspicion that one can easily understand how even certain beneficial measures adopted by the Government gave a sharp edge to the popular dread of their deliberate plan to convert the people *en masse* to Christianity. But some acts of the Government were certainly calculated to increase the public apprehensions. A few instances are quoted below.

Gopinath Nandi, mentioned above, "tells us that when all Patwaris or village accountants were required to learn Hindi in the Nagari script, they were sent to the Missionary school despite the objection of the Muslim Deputy Collector, Hikmatullah Khan. Their instruction was not limited to the language or the script". For Gopinath adds, "I am happy to say, upwards of three hundred grown-up men not only read the Gospel and attended prayers, but each of them was furnished with a copy of the New Testament to carry home".

The regulations about hospitals established by the Government made no distinction of caste in respect of accommodation, and sufficient attention was not given to the strict observance of the Purdah system. One of the worst instances is thus described by Hedayet Ali: "In 1849 or 1850 the authorities at Shaharunpore caused a large hospital to be built for the sick of all creeds and persuasions. The principal authorities (I purposely abstain from giving names, although I could do so) issued a proclamation, saying that all sick men or women, high or low, 'purdah nisheen' (those who never go out in public), or others, must resort to this hospital for treatment, and all native practitioners were forbidden to prescribe or attend sick people......people imagined in their ignorance that it was the intention of the British to take away the dignity and honour of all".[36]

Sir Syed Ahmad has pointed out that during the general famine of 1837, numbers of orphans were converted to Christianity, and this fact was considered throughout the North-Western Provinces as convincing proof of the intention of Government to reduce the country to poverty, and thus make its peoples Christians.[37]

Even when, in course of building roads or other public works, a temple was destroyed, it was felt by many that the work of public utility was merely a pretext to destroy the sanctuary.

It is against this background that we have to study the popular reaction to some of the legislation which sought to remove long-standing socio-religious abuses. The legislation, in 1829, abolishing the horrid practice of burning widows along with their husbands—commonly known as *Sati*—was undoubtedly a humane act for which its author, Lord Bentinck, will ever be blessed by the Indians. A section of enlightened Hindu public fully lent their active support to it. Nevertheless, there is no denying the fact, that they formed almost a microscopic minority, and the Hindus in general regarded it as an undue interference with their religion. The two laws of 1832 and 1850, removing disabilities due to change of religion, particularly conferring the right of inheritance to Christian converts (Act XXI of 1850),[38] were still more unpopular, and had less support behind them even from the educated classes. The Act of 1850 was offensive to both Hindus and Muslims who regarded it as an incentive to apostasy. To the Hindus it was specially galling that a converted son would inherit the property of his father without performing those religious rites and ceremonies after his death which is a necessary condition of inheritance in Hindu Law. Judicial decisions favouring conversion were strongly resented. The highest courts in all the Presidencies decreed that young inexperienced Hindu converts, instead of being placed under the guardianship of their parents, were to be forcibly made over with their wives to the missionaries against their will. On one occasion the Judge, who delivered such a judgment, was stoned by the people who surrounded the court, and the military had to be called in to save the situation. Commenting on this incident, an Indian wrote a letter to the *Hindoo Patriot* on April 30, 1857, that "one such instance, and not ten thousand false rumours circulated by the native press, is sufficient to disaffect whole nation towards their rulers"[39]

The Widow Remarriage Act, drafted by Lord Dalhousie but actually passed by Canning in 1856, was permissive in character. It did not, and was not likely to affect more than a few Hindu widows, but still the people raised the cry that Hinduism was in danger.

The cumulative effect of all this was to create a vague sense of dread in the minds of the people at large that their religion was in danger. Syed Ahmad laid great stress on the genuine apprehension of the people regarding mass conversion to Christianity. There is no doubt, says he, "that all persons, whether intelligent or ignorant, respectable or otherwise, believed that the Government was really and

sincerely desirous of interfering with the religion and customs of the people, converting them all, whether Hindus or Mahomedans, to Christianity, and forcing them to adopt European manners and habits".[40] The statement of Syed Ahmad is fully supported by other contemporary records. It is true that the fear was absolutely unfounded, and the British Government had no intention of encouraging, far less making, conversions to Christianity. But the Indians of the first half of the ninteenth century did not know what is fully known today, and it is difficult, therefore, to regard the fear and anxiety which the people felt as totally unjustified. In any case, there cannot be any doubt that such feelings not only did exist, but were deep-rooted, and provoked discontent, even hatred, of the people against the English.

V. GENERAL SPIRIT OF DISCONTENT

How far the above causes affected the people at large, and the extent to which it stirred their minds to active disaffection, may be estimated from the feelings freely expressed by different classes of people during the great outbreak of 1857. These feelings were clearly reflected in the various proclamations issued in different localities during the revolt of 1857. A good specimen is supplied by the proclamation issued in Azamgarh. It called upon Indians of all classes to rise against the faithless British whose sole object was to ruin them all. The zemindars were told, "It is very well known that the British assess lands very highly and this has been the cause of your ruin. Besides, when sued by a mean laborer, or a male or female servant, you are summoned without investigation to attend to their Court and are thus dishonored and degraded, and when you have to prosecute a case in their Court you are put to the expense of doing so on stamp paper and have to pay Court fees which are ruinous. Besides which you have to pay a percentage for roads and schools". The merchants were reminded: "You are also well aware that the faithless British have appropriated to themselves the monopoly of all lucrative trade such as indigo, opium, cloth etc., and left the less remunerative merchandise to you, and when you have to resort to their Courts you have to pay large sums for stamp papers and Court fees. Moreover, they realize money from the public in the shape of postage and school funds, and you, like the zemindars, are degraded by being summoned to their Courts and imprisoned or fined on the assertion of mean and low people". The officials could not but be aware "that in the Civil and Military Department all the less lucrative and dignified situations are given to the natives, and the well-paid and honorable ones to Europeans. For instance, in the

Military Line the highest post that a native attains is that of a Subadar on a salary of Rs. 60 or 70 a month, and in the Civil that of a Sudder Ameen on a salary of 500 Rupees, and Jagheers, rewards, maafees etc. are not known to be in existence". The artisans doubtless knew "that the Europeans import every sort of article from Europe leaving but a small trade in your hands". And lastly the "Scholars of both creeds of Hindus and Mosulmans (Moulvees and Pundits)" should not forget "that the British are opposed to your religion", "you should join us and gain the goodwill of your Creator, otherwise you will be considered sinners".[41]

The general discontent is also faithfully reflected in the petitions sent by various political organizations to the British Parliament on the eve of the renewal of East India Company's charter in 1853, to which reference has been made above.[41a]

VI. DISCONTENT AND DISAFFECTION OF THE SEPOYS

The discontent and disaffection against the British Raj were by no means confined to the civil population, but also extended to the Indian section of the army of the East India Company. In order to explain this, it is necessary to begin with a short account of the Company's army.

The East India Company's army in India consisted of two sections, one in which both officers and rank and file were Englishmen, and the other in which the commissioned officers were all British, but the rank and file, known as *sepoys* (anglicised from Sipahi, meaning soldier), and junior officers, subordinate to the lowest class of English officers, were recruited from various parts of India.

The armies of Bombay, Madras and Bengal were at first independent of one another, each under its own Commander-in-Chief. But towards the close of the eighteenth century the Bengal army became the army of the Central Government, and its Commander-in-Chief became the head of the Company's military establishment in India.

The first general reorganization of the Indian armies of the East India Company took place in 1796. The Company had then about 13,000 European soldiers, and 57,000 Indian, of whom Bengal and Madras had 24,000 each and Bombay 9,000. The reorganized Bengal army comprised (1) 3 battalions of European artillery; (2) 3 regiments of European infantry; (3) 4 regiments of regular native cavalry; and (4) 12 regiments of native infantry. The reorganized Madras army had (1) 2 battalions of European infantry; (2) 4 regi-

ments of cavalry; (3) 2 battalions of artillery; and (4) 11 regiments of native infantry. The reorganized Bombay army consisted of 6 companies of European artillery and four regiments of native infantry which were shortly increased to six. Each regiment of native infantry comprised two battalions. Another reorganization took place in 1824, replacing double battalion regiments by single battalion regiments. As a result of this reorganization, the armies of the three Presidencies stood as follows:

Bengal—Three brigades of horse artillery (9 European and 3 native troops); 5 battalions of foot artillery; 2 regiments of European infantry; 8 regiments of regular native cavalry; 5 regiments of irregular cavalry; and 68 battalions of native infantry. It also included local and provincial Corps.

Madras—Two brigades of horse artillery (one European and one native); 3 battalions of foot artillery; 8 regiments of native cavalry; 2 regiments of European infantry; 52 battalions of native infantry; and 3 extra and local battalions.

Bombay—Four troops of horse artillery and 8 companies of foot artillery; 3 regiments of regular cavalry and two regiments of irregular cavalry; 2 regiments of European infantry; and 24 battalions of native infantry.

The irregular cavalry, referred to above, consisted of horsemen who were not clothed or armed by the State but furnished their own horse and equipment. Not more than two or three European officers were attached to each of these corps. It followed the old *silladari* system still prevalent in Indian States.

As the British dominions extended in all directions, need was felt of additional troops outside the regular cadre. These irregular battalions and regiments consisted of local corps, "more rough and ready than the regular army", raised for the defence of new territories and protection of Indian ruling chiefs. But their number was augmented by recruitment of troops who had proved their high military qualities while fighting against the British. Thus irregular battalions of Gurkhas and Sikhs were raised, respectively, after the Nepal and Sikh Wars.[42]

In addition to regular and irregular troops maintained by the Company, there were troops maintained by the Indian rulers under the terms of the Subsidiary Alliance, mentioned above, or separate treaties. These were maintained at the expense of the Indian rulers who paid in cash or by cession of territories, but were officered by the British and for all practical purposes formed part of the Company's army. For, although theoretically the Subsidiary forces or

special contingents were intended for the service of the States concerned, they were freely used in all the wars of the Company.[43]

The sepoys or Indian soldiers for the Bombay and Madras armies were generally recruited from the Moplahs and other Muslims, Hindus from Mangalore and Tellicherri, Tamils, and Telugus, more popularly known as the Tilingas. The name 'Bengal Army' is somewhat a misnomer, for Bengal had little or nothing to do with the personnel of the army, and the sepoys of the Bengal Army were chiefly high-caste Hindus (mainly Brahmans), Rajputs, and Jats of Upper India, and sturdy Pathans, also of the same part of the country. The dominant elements, forming a majority, belonged to the State, now known as Uttar Pradesh, specially Avadh, which, until 1856, was an independent kingdom, at least in name and form.

The first battalion of sepoys was formed by Clive shortly before the Battle of Palasi and took part in it. They had a *brilliant record* of service under the Company for a century. They were held in high esteem, and many regarded them as "the finest soldier, tallest, best-formed, and of the noblest presence". There were native officers in command of the sepoys, but they were subordinate to European officers of whom there were three in each battalion comprising about one thousand men. In course of time, however, the native officers lost their real power by the inclusion of more Englishmen. "An English subaltern was appointed to every company, and the native officer then began to collapse into something little better than a name".[44] The army thus offered no career to the gentry and aristocracy. "The native service of the Company came down to a dead level of common soldiering, and rising from the ranks by painfully slow process to merely nominal command".[45] Thenceforth the soldiers were recruited from the lower strata of society, though in the Bengal Army the sepoys were chiefly of high caste. The sepoys naturally smarted under a sense of unjustified inferiority. "Though he might give signs of the military genius of a Hyder, he knew that he could never attain the pay of an English subaltern, and that the rank to which he might attain, after some thirty years of faithful service, would not protect him from the insolent dictation of an ensign fresh from England".[46]

So, the sepoys always nursed a sense of strong resentment at their low scale of salary and poor prospects of promotion, neither of which, in their opinion, had any real correspondence to their worth, particularly when contrasted with those of their British colleagues. The difference was scandalous to a degree. A retired officer noted: "The entire army of India amounts to 315 520 men costing £ 9,802,235. Out of this sum no less than £ 5,668,110 are expended on

51,316 European officers and soldiers". Moreover, "the European corps take no share in the rough ordinary duties of the service....They are lodged, fed, and paid in a manner unknown to other soldiers". This contrast could not but adversely affect the sepoys' morale.

"It has been contended that though his pay was small the sepoy was financially well off because his needs were few and his standard of living was low. But the first few months' pay had to be spent in illegal gratifications. Sitaram says that the drill Havildar and the European Sergeant of his company took a dislike to him because he had not paid the usual fee. 'This fee was Rs. 16/-, some five or six of which went to the European sergeant of the company the recruit was posted to'. He adds that 'seven rupees a month will not support either Punjabee, Sikh or Mussulman'. But this remark applied to the post-mutiny period when prices had gone up. In the easier days before the Mutiny the sepoy did not fare better. We learn from a Bengaleé clerk attached to the cavalry regiment at Bareilly in 1857 that the sepoys had to pay for his uniform and he bought his daily ration on credit from the bania in the regimental bazar. On the pay day his account was settled and after the deduction for his ration etc., the balance was paid to him. Some sepoys got at the end of the month no more than a rupee or a rupee and a half, in other cases the monthly saving did not exceed a few annas. His daily meal consisted of dal and roti, and with his limited credit he could not indulge in any luxuries except an occasional dish of Taro. His life was hard indeed, for the maximum pay that he could expect did not exceed nine rupees unless he was promoted, and promotion went by seniority and not by merit. The sowar was not much better off than the sepoy, for the former's pay varied from twenty-one to thirty rupees and many more deductions were made therefrom".[47] The feeling of the sepoys is reflected in many of the proclamations issued during the Mutiny. Reference has already been made to one of these issued in Azamgarh.[48] A few lines may be quoted from another proclamation. "We have ungrudgingly shed our blood in the service of our foreign masters, we have conquered for them kingdom after kingdom until nothing remained to be annexed within the four corners of the country, but what has been the return? —spoliation of our people, degradation of our princes, and worst of all,— inconceivable insults to our religion".[49] It would appear from these proclamations that the sepoys were influenced by all the causes which provoked discontent and disaffection among the civil population of all classes, as described in the previous sections. This is only quite natural, because they and the members of their families formed part and parcel of the civil population. In particular, they felt

keenly the inferiority of the Indians in public service and the insult to their religion.

In spite of their material grievances in respect of pay and allowance, and the prevailing spirit of discontent and disaffection which they shared with the civil population, the sepoys, generally speaking, remained faithful to their masters. But extreme measures on the part of the authorities had occasionally provoked them to mutiny. Reference has been made in Volume VIII to several such instances. One of the most serious, which bears a very close resemblance to the mutiny of 1857, so far as the genesis is concerned, was the mutiny at Vellore in 1806. It was caused by what the sepoys regarded as an affront to their religion. When new regulations were introduced in the Madras Army, forbidding the men to wear the marks of caste upon their fore-heads, ordering them to shave off their beards, and compelling them to exchange their old turbans for new ones with leather cockades, the Indian soldiers broke into mutiny at Vellore which, with the backing of the members of the exiled family of Tipu Sultan who lived there, threatened to assume serious proportions. This was in 1806, almost exactly half a century before the great Mutiny of 1857. Midway between the two, there was a mutiny of sepoys at Barrackpur in 1824 during the First Burmese War. In view of its great importance it requires a somewhat detailed description.

About the middle of the year 1824, the 47th Native Infantry had arrived at Barrackpur in order to proceed to take part in some of the operations of the Burmese War. Disputes at once arose regarding the provision of carriages for taking the personal belongings of the sepoys. It was customary for the sepoys to defray the expenses themselves, but on the present occasion bullocks could not be hired and they could only be purchased at extravagant prices. The sepoys, therefore, applied for assistance, but this was refused. This highly irritated the sepoys and they began to manifest their grievances in many ways. In the parade held on October 30, 1824, they appeared without their knapsacks and refused to bring them even when asked to do so, on the ground that they were unfit for use. A part of the regiment then declared that they would not proceed to Rangoon or elsewhere by sea and they would not move at all unless they were to have double *batta*. The Commanding Officer, unable to subdue the discontent, dismissed the regiment and proceeded to Calcutta to consult the Commander-in-Chief. After his return he held a parade on November 1. At this parade the sepoys burst into acts of open violence. The same mutinous spirit also affected the other regiments which were stationed at Barrackpur, preparatory to their

proceeding on service. The Commander-in-Chief, therefore, brought in European troops from Calcutta, and in the next parade, when the sepoys refused to comply with the order "to ground arms," the European soldiers fired against them from a battery in their rear. A Calcutta letter, dated 3 November, 1825, published in the *Glasgow Herald*, gives a graphic description of what followed:

"About 410 held out...... Sir Edward Paget gave orders to fire. In a moment after, grape shot and cannon bullets played upon the poor fellows from all quarters; they then threw down their arms and ran; some escaped by running into Hooghly—some were taken prisoners—upwards of 60 lay dead upon the field, and this afternoon about a dozen or two are either to be hanged or shot".[50] As stated in the letter, the rebel troops speedily broke and fled in every direction, but many were taken prisoners. They were tried by a Court Martial and a large number were sentenced to death. A large number of death sentences were, however, commuted into imprisonment with hard labour. The native officers, although not active participators in the rebellion, were dismissed from the service and the number of the regiment was erased from the list of the army. It may be mentioned here that many persons at that time believed that the want of bullocks and carriages was not the real cause of the mutiny and that actually it was the result of many other grievances among which two were the most important, namely, (1) their having been required to embark on board a ship, and (2) the unjust influence of the Havildar Major with regard to the promotion of the non-commissioned officers in the battalion. The petition, which the sepoys made to the Commander-in-Chief, shows that their main, if not the only, grievance was that they were asked to embark on board ship, and that all the sepoys swore by the Ganges-water and tulsi-plant that they would never put their foot in a ship. It has been held by experienced military officers that the destruction of the British detachment at Ramu spread "alarm throughout the native army, and its effect was to damp the spirit, if not to shake the fidelity. of the native troops." The Burmese War was very unpopular and the prospect of fighting in a country of marsh and jungle was undoubtedly dreaded by the sepoys. The Calcutta letter, referred to above, adds: "By the accounts received yesterday from Rangoon we have received a check; the sepoys did not fight with the same spirit as formerly; they lay down before the enemy, and would neither fight nor run away". It is also a fact that all classes of camp-followers had taken advantage of this circumstance and forced the Government to pay remuneration on much higher scale than usual. The sepoys, therefore, regarded themselves as entitled to partake of

advantages "so lavishly and indiscriminately bestowed on men". whom they regarded as inferiors. These were the real causes to which they added bad knapsacks, want of carriages and irregular promotion etc., which were merely contributory causes.

But whatever might have been the causes, the mutiny at Barrackpur in November, 1824, made a deep impression upon the sepoys, and the memory of the martyrs for the cause of religion was long cherished by them with reverence. This was brought to light in the issue of the *Englishman* of Calcutta, dated May 30, 1857.[60a] In view of the very interesting light it throws on the revolutionary mentality of the sepoys the extract may be quoted in full:

"A circumstance has come to our knowledge which, unless it had been fully authenticated, we could scarcely have believed to be possible, much less true.

"When the Mutiny at Barrackpore broke out in 1825, the ringleader, a Brahmin of the 27th Regiment Native Infantry, was hanged on the edge of the tank where a large tree now stands, and which was planted on the spot to commemorate the fact. This tree, sacred Banian, is pointed to by the Brahmins and others to this day, as the spot where an unholy deed was performed, a Brahmin hanged.

"This man was at the time considered in the light of a martyr and his brass *poojah* or worshipping utensils, consisting of small trays, incense-holders, and other brass articles used by Brahmins during their prayers, were carefully preserved and lodged in the quarter-guard of the Regiment, where they remain to this day; they being at this moment in the quarter-guard of the 43rd Light Infantry at Barrackpore.

"These relics, worshipped by the sepoys, have been for thirty-two years in the safe-keeping of Regiments, having by the operation of the daily relief of the quarter-guard, passed through the hands of 233,600 men, and have served to keep alive, in the breasts of many, the recollection of a period of trouble, scene of Mutiny and its accompanying swift and terrible punishment which, had these utensils not been present to their sight as confirmation, would probably have been looked upon as fables, or at the most as very doubtful stories."

Such memories and memorials were undoubtedly important factors in the outbreak of the mutiny in 1857.

About a year later disturbances broke out in Assam. On the morning of 14 October, 1825, the Grenadier Company refused to march on the pretext of bad climate. When the ringleaders were seized and put in confinement, all the other sepoys demanded that they, too, should be confined with them. The Court Martial sentenced all the ringleaders to death; the other sepoys were paid and discharged.

On 24 November, 1838, occurred the first of a series of incipient mutinies owing to non-payment of full *batta* (additional or special allowance). The native regiment at Sholapur at first did not join the parade, but later turned out when the Infantry and Horse Artillery marched towards them. One man in each ten was punished

—they were discharged after suffering imprisonment for two years. The non-payment of *batta* led to the mutiny of sepoys in Secunderabad, Hyderabad, Malligaum and Kotah in the Sagar Division in 1842. Some of the regiments were disbanded and the rest were pardoned.

In 1839 symptoms of disaffection could be clearly seen among the sepoys who were taken to Afghānistān during the First Afghān War. The Hindu sepoys fancied that they had lost their caste, for they had to cross the Sindhu and go outside India, which was forbidden by their religion, they had to forego their daily bath, take their bread from Muslims, and to wear jackets made of sheep-skin. They, therefore, became disgusted and highly dissastisfied, but kept quiet, determined to ventilate their grievances and discontent when suitable opportunity occurred. The Muslim sepoys were dissatisfied as they had to fight against men of their own faith. Actually a Muslim Subadar and a Hindu Subadar were, respectively, shot dead and dismissed for expressing these sentiments. These punishments further excited the sepoys.[51]

The same mutinous spirit was also displayed on many occasions due to discontent caused by breach of faith on the part of the Government in respect of their allowances.

"During the first Afghan War General Pollock had paid his troops a special *batta* when they crossed the Indus. This was treated as a precedent and the sepoy expected similar inducements when he was called upon to undergo the hardship of trans-Indus employment. But in 1843 Sind had been annexed and become an integral part of the British Indian empire. The sepoy could not, therefore, legally claim any special compensation for serving in an Indian province, however distant it might be from his usual station. This was a piece of legal casuistry he could not understand. The Indus was still there, life in Sind was as hard as it had been in 1842, and if his claim was legitimate in 1842, how could it lose its validity in 1844?"[52]

The 64th Regiment accordingly marched towards Sindh, the sepoys being under the impression that they would receive all the benefits which their predecessors had enjoyed. On the pay day they were disillusioned and broke into violence. They threw stones and brickbats at their officers and even belaboured them. Thirty-nine ringleaders were arrested of whom six were executed, seven imprisoned for life, and the rest, save one, sentenced to various terms of imprisonment.

The 34th N. I. and three other regiments also refused to proceed to Sindh unless the old pecuniary benefits were restored. The 34th

regiment was taken to Meerut, and in the presence of other troops, its arms and accoutrements were taken away and it was disbanded. After this example the other sepoys agreed to march to Sindh unconditionally.

One important point in all these grievances was the unanimous complaint of the sepoys of the 64th Regiment that they had been deceived by the Commanding Officer, and it was proved that they were persuaded to go to Sindh on the temptation held out to them of receiving full *batta*. It is significant also that the Commanding Officer was removed, thereby proving the truth of the allegation. "But the damage done was irreparable. The sepoy found that he could trust his officers no more. No wonder that when the crisis came in 1857 the assurances of Commanding Officers had little or no weight with him".[53]

Similarly, the 6th Madras cavalry, when sent to Jubbulpore in 1843, was given to understand that their stay there would be short, but actually they were permanently stationed there on a lower allowance.

After the refusal of the Bengal Army to go to Sindh without special allowance, some infantry regiments were induced to go there on the guarantee of the Governor of Madras, who was also their Commander-in-Chief, that they would be entitled to the same allowances as granted for service in Burma. But when the troops had proceeded far they learnt that the additional allowance promised by the Governor could not be sanctioned as it was contrary to Bengal Regulations. The sepoys strongly resented these cruel breaches of faith and made violent demonstrations. Court Martial was held and a large number of sepoys were punished. What was still more important, the sepoys took to heart the lesson they learnt, namely that no reliance can be placed upon promises made by the Government.[54]

Mutinous spirit was also displayed in 1849 by the sepoys belonging to the army of occupation in the Panjāb. Towards the end of that year Sir Charles Napier collected "evidence which, in his judgment, proved that twenty-four regiments were only waiting for on opportunity to rise".[55] An incipient mutiny at Wazeerabad was suppressed in time, but a mutiny broke out at Govindgarh. On the first day of February, 1850, the native infantry there refused to take off their accoutrements and demanded to be discharged at once. Though they were pacified after some time, they armed themselves without any order the very next morning, and as it was feared that they wanted to occupy the fort, the European troops suddenly attacked them and order was restored. Ninety-five sepoys were sentenced

to various terms of imprisonment and the whole regiment was disbanded. Though Napier suppressed the mutiny, he sympathized with the mutineers and restored a regulation by which the sepoys were granted compensation for dearness of provisions at a higher rate. For this he was reprimanded by Dalhousie, the Governor-General, and resigned his post in disgust.[56]

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1. Cf. Ch. VI.
2. Cf. Ch. IX.
3. For fuller account see Ch. XX.
4. See p. 222.
5. See p. 155.
6. For details, see pp. 371-72.
7. Ch. XII, section VII.
8. Ch XII, section VIII.
9. *SAK*. 10, 43
10. For the details of the episode and the passages quoted, cf. *BSOAS*, XX. 69
11. *SAK*, 42.
12. Ibid, 43.
13. Cf Vol. VIII of this series; *RPD*, 85 ff. According to Sir Reginald Coupland, an apologist of British rule, "this period of exploitation in its sinister sense was inevitable" (*India—A Re-statement*, p. 42)
14. *Report of the Indian Industrial Commission* (1916-18), p. 6.
15. *RPD*, 99 ff.
16. Griffiths, 391.
17. Wilson, 1. 335.
18. RPD. 101.
19. Griffiths, 398.
20. Ibid.
21. Karl Marx, in *New York Daily Tribune*, June 10, 1853 (quoted in *RPD*, 77-8).
22. Karl Marx, *Capital*. Vol. I, Chapter XV, section 5 (quoted in *RPD*, 78).
23. *RPD*, 101-2
24. Ibid, 103; *Imp Gaz*., III. 145.
25. *RPD*, 103.
26. Ibid, 104
27. Porter, *Progress of the Nation* (1847), p. 750 (quoted in *RPD*, 105)
27a. This topic will be discussed in detail in Chapter XXIX.
27b. See pp. 371-2.
28. Kaye-I, Vol. I, 176.
28a. Macdonald, 160
29. *Calcutta Journal*, March 11. 1822.
30. Sherring, *The Indian Church during the Great Rebellion*, pp. 184-5 (quoted in Sen, 10-11).
31. See p. 383.
32. Sen, p. 11, f n., 15, where other instances are referred to.
33. *SAK*. 17.
33a. Unpublished records, Madras Archives.
34. *SAK*, 20.
35. Ibid.
36. Sen, p. 11 and p. 13. f.n., 17.
37. *SAK*, 16.
38. These will be discussed in Chapter XLV.
39. SB-II. 4, f.n., 5.
40. *SAK*, 15.
41. Foreign Political Consultations, No. 197, 8 October, 1858 (quoted in Sen. 38).
41a See pp. 389-95.
42. The description of the army is based on *Imp. Gaz*., IV. 333 ff.
43. Cf. the history of the Hyderabad Contingent on pp. 87-8 above.
44. Kaye-I. Vol. I, 211.
45. Ibid, 211-12.
46. Holmes, 49.
47. Sen, 21-22.

48. See above, pp. 423-24.
49. Sen, p. 1.
50. *SB-II*, p. 2.
50a. I am indebted to Dr. S. B. Chaudhuri for this reference.
51. Majumdar, 246.
52. Sen, 18.
53. Sen, 19.
54. Ibid.
55. Holmes, 57.
56 Ibid.

CHAPTER XIV

DISTURBANCES AND ARMED RESISTANCE

1. *Introductory*

It will appear from what has been said in the preceding chapter that there was a great deal of discontent against the British rule among all classes of Indians. The disaffected people were not altogether oblivious of the various benefits they enjoyed under the British, to which reference will be made later. But as always happens, appreciation of the blessings received seldom outweighs the resentment for injuries suffered, even though the former excel the latter in degree or content. Besides, whatever may be the case in private relations of life, gratitude is a rare virtue in politics, and people have pretty short memory of political vicissitudes. It did not take the Indians long to forget the anarchy and confusion, as well as misery and distress, caused by the political turmoils of the eighteenth century. They did not stop to think what the British did, but rather laid stress on what they failed to do. Therefore popular discontent and disaffection continued to be the main characteristics of the British rule almost throughout the nineteenth century. These grew more and more intense as the years rolled by, mainly because the people became more and more politically conscious and looked upon the defects and shortcomings of the British rule as far more serious than they appeared to their predecessors. Nevertheless, it must be said that the Indians, in general, bore their grievances with patience and indifference characteristic of the oriental peoples. They murmurred and grumbled; sometimes their complaints became more vociferous; occasionally they grew restive; but very rarely they thought of taking to violent means to remedy their grievances. So far as the masses were concerned, the expression of the public sentiment was restricted to partial and desultory manifestations and to petty acts of violence. The discontent among the intellectuals grew in volume, but they knew very well the might of the British and the weakness of their own people, rendering hopeless any attempt to gain reforms by force. Their opposition, though growing more and more intense, never found any expression except through writings and speeches, and the only means of remedy they could think of were prayers and petitions. Their faith in British justice, though shaken by repeated disappointments, never vanished, and they looked upon the British rule in India

as a divine dispensation which must be accepted with all its virtues and failings.

But between these two extreme classes of passive sufferers, there were groups of people led by brave individuals, who cast aside all prudence and moderation and responded to the primitive human instinct of violent reaction against injuries and insults without any thought of its consequences. Weak and isolated though they were, they never feared to rise in armed revolt against the all-powerful British authority in order to defend their rights and religion, or take vengeance for insults and injuries, true or imaginary. They had no vision of the country as a whole and were not urged by any such noble motive as freeing their motherland from foreign yoke. Their outlook was limited by their own interests, narrow and parochial, and the degree of resistance offered by them varied according to the means at the disposal of each, for they never thought of any organized attempt on a general plan by the combination of different groups based on common ends.

Nevertheless, these occasional outbursts form a significant feature of British rule during the period under review. They serve as unmistakable evidence of the discontent and disaffection noted in the preceding chapter and, as Wilson puts it, deserve notice "as *indications of the feelings entertained by considerable portions of the people in different parts of India towards their rulers*".[1] They also show the long, difficult and tedious process through which the British evolved the *Pax Britannica* which was one of their greatest gifts to India. History records the five major wars which the British had to fight during this period, namely, two against Burma, two against the Panjāb, and one against Sindh, and a few minor campaigns such as those against Gwalior and Bharatpur. But the numerous smaller campaigns against local risings are often ignored, though, as will be seen, they not unoften proved to be serious outbreaks backed by strenuous efforts and heroic endeavours. Some of these are recorded below, and for the sake of convenience they are arranged and classified according to the primary causes from which they sprang, or the special circumstances that called them forth.

2. *Disturbances in 1818-20*

Some of the disturbances in West India may be directly traced to the intrigues of the Peshwa Baji Rao II and his favourite lieutenant Trimbakji Danglia, when they turned hostile to the British.[2] Naturally they worked upon the minds of the Chiefs and tribes who entertained no friendly feelings towards the British. Two of the re-

bellions stirred up in this way deserve special mention, namely of the Bhils and the ruler of Cutch.

The Bhils were primitive and predatory peoples whose settlements were scattered in the Western Ghats and the country at its base, their chief strongholds being in Khandesh. The Bhils in the plains were generally good cultivators, but those in the hilly regions were mostly freebooters. There was a rising of the Bhils in 1817-8 and the British Government asserted that it was stirred up by Trimbakji after his escape from the fort of Thana. The insurgents numbered about 8,000, but the troubles subsided, due partly to military action and partly to conciliatory policy adopted by Elphinstone. But there was a more general insurrection in 1819 when the Bhils entrenched themselves in several outposts and ravaged the neighbouring plains. Several British detachments, sent against them, destroyed the Bhil settlements, killed many of them, and subjected others to severe punishment.

The insurrection of the Bhils, however, continued with occasional lull. The situation was worsened in 1825 by the reported reverses of the British in the Burmese War. Sewram, a blacksmith, induced the Bhils of Baglana to rise, on production of forged letters purporting to be written by the Raja of Sātārā. In spite of vigorous military measures the predatory activities of the Bhils continued, and even the village patels were discovered to be in league with them. In 1831 the Bhils of Dhar were excited to rebellion by a political leader, Uchet Singh, who successfully fought with his Bhil levies against the ruler of the State, and the British had to intervene. Gradually the dual measures of coercion and conciliation succeeded in converting the Bhils into peaceful cultivators. There was a recrudescence of troubles in Malwa in 1846, but it was quickly put down.[3]

The Peshwa Baji Rao II also succeeded, by his intrigues, in spreading anti-British sentiments in Cutch and Kathiawar.[4] When the Subsidiary Forces of Gaekwar were sent against the rebel chiefs of Kathiawar, Rao Bharmal, ruler of Cutch, despatched a body of Arabs to the aid of a refractory chief in Navanagar. Marauding bands from Wagar, a district in eastern part of Cutch, also carried on depredations in British territories. A British force, 4000 strong, was sent to Cutch, and Rao Bharmal concluded a treaty in 1816 by ceding some territories and paying the sum of twenty *lakhs* of rupees as indemnity. The peace, was, however, of short duration. The Jhareja Chiefs were alienated from Bharmal, and Ladhuba, a cousin of the Rao, and the daughter's son of a Jhareja Chief, was murdered by a body of Arab mercenaries. It was believed that this was done at the instigation of the Rao, and he also intended to kill the widow of

Ladhuba. Presumably, the pro-British attitude of the Jhareja Chiefs was at the root of the dissensions between them and their ruler. In any case the British Government warned the Rao "that any practices against her safety or that of her infant, would incur the severest displeasure of the British Government". Irritated by this "interference in his family affairs, which he, with truth, averred, was unauthorised by the treaty, the Rao began to collect mercenary troops, and to call for the contingents of his chiefs with the unavowed intention of expelling the British from his country".[5]

Bharmal Rao sent five thousand troops against Arisir, a fortified town belonging to the father of Ladhuba's widow, one of the Jhareja chieftains who were under British protection. A British Division marched upon Bhuj on 24 March, 1819, and captured it without difficulty. Rao Bharmal submitted and was deposed in favour of his infant son. The administration was carried on by a Regency composed of Jhareja Chiefs, under the superintendence of the British Resident, and a British force replaced the troops of Bharmal. The integrity of Cutch was guaranteed for an annual subsidy of two *lakhs* of rupees. The establishment of British influence in Cutch was regarded with alarm by the Amirs of Sindh, and this feeling caused troubles in future.

The Regency had soon to face troubles from bands of Waghar and Khosa bandittis. After the settlement of Waghar district in 1816, many of its people, half-banditti and half-landholders, had lost their lands and fled to Parkar. They were joined by the Khosas, scattered remains of a tribe driven from Sindh in 1786 and forced to live in wild desert along the edge of Rann of Cutch, 'plundering and levying blackmail on the neighbouring districts'. The Waghar Chiefs and Khosas ravaged the villages in Cutch. The British invited the Amirs of Sindh to help them in putting down the ravages, and a detachment of troops from Sindh joined the British. But the Sindh troops were suspected of helping the Khosas, and it so happened that one night they (troops of Sindh) were exposed to British fusillade supposed to be directed against the Khosas who were encamped near by. The British explained it as due to confusion, but the Sindhis "represented the attack as the result of design".[6] When the British pursued the Khosas across the boundary, the Sindh Government complained of it as a violation of its territory. A body of Sindhi troops entered Cutch, took Loona, a town fifty miles from Bhuj, the capital of Cutch, and laid waste the adjacent district. A British detachment drove away the Sindhis, and the Bombay Government immediately demanded to invade the country. The Governor-General in Council, however, was averse to war as

they thought that "the country (Sindh) was not worth possessing and its occupation would involve us in all the intrigues and wars......".[7] This is an interesting commentary on the subsequent British policy towards Sindh narrated above in Chapter VIII. For the time being Sindh was saved. Its Government disowned the outrage of its troops and promised to restrain the Khosas and other marauders from any inroads into the British dominion. Accordingly a treaty was concluded on 9 November, 1820. The Waghar Chiefs were also conciliated by the restoration of their lands on condition that they would not commit any act against law and order.

The reported discomfiture of the British in the Burmese war once more kindled the dying embers of discontent in Cutch into a blazing flame. Shortly after the establishment of Regency the Jharejas were generally "dissatisfied with the control to which they were subjected".[8] Some of the Jhareja Chiefs, disaffected to the Regency, were banished and their territories were forfeited on charges of insubordination and rapine. They had sought refuge in Sindh, whose Amirs, "like the rest of the native princes, catching eagerly at the rumours of disaster suffered by the British Government",[9] secretly supported them. The reduction in the British force at Cutch appeared to the fugitive chiefs to offer a golden opportunity for the recovery of their forfeited lands and even the restoration of Rao Bharmal to his throne. With the connivance of the Amirs they assembled a body of about two thousand Minnis and Sindhis. At the beginning of 1825 they wrote a letter to the Resident calling upon him to "restore Rao Bharmal to the throne", and crossed the borders. They ravaged the country and occupied the fort of Balari, near Anjar, thereby cutting off the communication between Bhuj and the rest of the province. They defeated the troops sent to recover Balari and even attacked Anjar. They were ultimately repulsed, and disappeared in the Rann, but "the large bodies of troops continued to be assembled on the frontier, menacing the province under British protection". Large reinforcements from Kairon and Bombay enabled Col. M. Napier to restore order in the country.[10]

The causes of discontent in Cutch, however, lay deeper. The people disliked the British rule for its innovations, and suffered very much from the oppressive exactions of the British revenue system. Troubles broke out again in 1831. In order to allay the suspicions of the people and pacify the country, the British Government issued in 1832 a proclamation promising "to revert to the ancient usages and customs of the country in all respects and most strictly to uphold the same for the preservation of the public peace and tranquillity".[11] Cutch gradually settled down to normal life.

The insurrection in Merwara, in 1820, was also an offshoot of the fall of the Maratha power. The British had acquired Ajmer, a part of Merwara, from Daulat Rao Sindhia in 1818, but the Mers defied the attempts of the British to establish their control over them. A force was despatched in March, 1819, against the recalcitrant peoples in some villages, who were carrying on depredations in the plains. This led to a general revolt in November, 1820. The rebels attacked the police in different posts and killed a number of them. A strong British force, helped by the troops of Mewar and Marwar, to whose rulers belonged the remaining parts of Merwara, crushed the rebellion at the beginning of 1821. The Mers were enrolled in a battalion of 8 companies of 70 men each.[12]

3. *Disturbances in 1824-26*

A crop of violent acts may be directly traced to the early discomfitures of the British in the First Burmese War, the exaggerated reports of which were circulated all over India. As Metcalfe wrote, "these produced an extraordinary sensation all over India, amounting to an expectation of our immediate downfall".[13] The effect was aggravated by the march of troops from various military stations in the interior to the war front, for it created a belief in the popular mind that the resources of the British Government were wholly absorbed by the War. Besides, the knowledge that the task of maintaining order was consequently entrusted to weak, irregular forces acted as an incentive to local risings.

It has been mentioned above, that the recurrence of Bhil insurrection and troubles in Cutch in 1824 were both due to this cause. The spirit of revolt was, however, specially manifest in Upper India. As Shore observes, "in the course of 1824, there was scarcely a district, in the upper Provinces in particular, in which a spirit of disaffection was not more or less manifested".[14] The most serious was the Gujar rising in 1824 near Shaharanpur. This territory formed a part of the Doab which was ceded by the Sindhia to the British after his defeat in the Second Maratha War (1803). The resumption of the enormous estate of Ramdayal, after his death, in 1813, by the British, had caused a revolt of the Gujars. Although this was suppressed, the discontent and disaffection remained, and once more found expression in 1824, when the situation was regarded as favourable for reasons stated above. Bijoy Singh, the *Talukdar* of Kunja, near Rurki, and a relative of Ramdayal, broke into revolt, and was joined by a notorious chief of bandits, named Kalwa, and adventurers from all parts of the country. With their help Bijay Singh rapidly organized a formidable insurrection. He established

his headquarters in the mud fort of Kunja, assumed the title of Raja and levied contributions from the surrounding districts. He also sacked the town of Bhagwanpur and plundered a strong treasure escort. A detachment of the Gurkha battalion and a small body of horse were sent against him. They attacked the fort of Kunja and took it after a fierce combat in which nearly two hundred insurgents were killed. It was revealed later that large reinforcements from many districts were coming to augment the force of Bijay Singh, but they were too late and could not join him before his rebellion collapsed after the fall of Kunja.[15]

At a somewhat earlier date a religious mendicant at Badawar (in Patiala) organized a rebellion. He declared himself to be the Kali, the last *avatar* (incarnation) of the Hindus, and announced his intention to drive away the foreigners (the British) from India. He was arrested, but a large crowd, headed by a body of Akalis, came to effect his rescue. A body of horse was sent against them and they were easily dispersed.[16]

The turbulent Jats, living in the district of Rohtak, to the west of Delhi, rose into rebellion shortly after the area passed into the hands of the British after the Second Maratha War. The events of 1824 once more made them active rebels, and they were joined by the Mewatis and Bhattis. Arms and ammunition were collected, communication with Delhi was cut off, Government property was looted, and there was public proclamation that the authority of the British Government was at an end. In Hissar an exiled chief, named Surajmal, at the head of four hundred matchlocks and a party of horse, took the fort of Behut. Similar proceedings also took place in the district of Rewari. The Government raised two additional regiments of Irregular Horse and increased the Gurkha Local Battalions.[17]

The disorders spread to Bundelkhand where Nana Pandit, a *Jagirdar* of the Raja of Jalan, plundered the town of Kalpi and partially burnt it.[18] In the Tapti valley considerable ravages were made by Shaikh Dalla (or Dulla), a notorious Pindari chief. He was joined by an impostor pretending to be Chimnaji Appa, the brother of the ex-Peshwa Baji Rao, and also by a body of Bhils. It is not unlikely that he was in league with the fugitive Appa Sahib, the ex-ruler of Nāgpur. Troops had to be despatched against Shaikh Dalla in different directions before the depredations caused by him came to an end. He, however, became a local hero as is proved by the following popular folk-song:

Below is the Earth, up above is Allah;
In between moves Shaikh Dallah.[19]

Reference has already been made above to the rebellion of the Bhils in the neighbouring region of Baglana. In Gujarāt there was an outbreak of the Kolis, a rude and turbulent people scattered over the province, from the borders of Cutch to the Western ghats. They committed depredations of all kinds and burnt and plundered villages even in the neighbourhood of Baroda. They entrenched themselves in the village of Dudama, near Kaira, which was enclosed by thick hedges of the milk plant, and defended by mud fort. A party of Bombay Native Infantry, in trying to storm the place, was exposed to a destructive fire and compelled to fall back. The Kolis, attacked by a stronger force, left their post and retreated to the Rann of Cutch, but after a short interval returned and renewed their ravages. In 1825 they were dispersed by a body of Dragoons and Native Infantry, and for the time being their depredations ceased. The Kolis revolted again in 1828, as there was acute discontent among them, most of them being thrown out of employment by the dismantling of the forts. A large body of troops had to be sent against them before the rising was suppressed.

There was a far more serious outbreak in 1839. Though the Kolis, joined by other turbulent elements, mostly took to plundering villages and committing other excesses, there was a political motive behind the outbreak. Three Brahmans led the movement, and felt bold enough to work for the restoration of the Peshwa, as the strength of the Poona garrison had lately been reduced. The rebels assumed the charge of the Government in the name of the Peshwa.

The Kolis broke into revolt again in 1844. Proceeding from their headquarters in the hilly country to the north-west of Poona, they carried on depredations in the districts of Nasik and Ahmadnagar, and next year proceeded as far as Sātārā. A strong military force brought the situation under control in 1846, but the embers of the revolt were not finally extinguished till the capture of all the leaders in 1850.[20]

Disturbances in 1824 were not confined to North India but also spread to the South. In December, 1824, a Brahman, named Divakar Dikshit, with a few associates, plundered Sindgi, about four miles to the east of Bijapur. He set up a regular Government of his own and made arrangement for the collection of revenues.[21] There was a rising at Omraiz, a locality in the neighbourhood. The headman, refusing to pay the revenue, sheltered himself in a stronghold, and from this base committed depredations on surrounding villages. A military force, sent from Sholapur in February, 1825, failed, and several officers were killed. After this the garrison evacuated the fort and dispersed into the jungles.[22]

There was a far more serious rising in Kittur, a small district near Dharwar. The chief of Kittur was one of the *desais*, who were originally independent chiefs in Bombay, but whose territories were gradually swallowed up by the Marathas. The *desai* of Kittur, however, was one of the few who retained his possessions. In recognition of his services to the British during the Third Maratha War, the *desai* of Kittur, who held Sampgaon and the greater part of Bidi in the Belgaum District, was raised to the position of a Ruling Chief by a grant from the British Government which declared the fief to be hereditary in his family.[23] Shivalinga Rudra, the *desai* of Kittur, died on 11 September, 1824. He had no male issue, but it was alleged that prior to his death he left injunctions for the adoption of a son, which was accordingly done. The Collector of Dharwar, Thackeray, grew suspicious of the whole thing and, as a result of inquiries made, refused to recognise the adoption as a valid one. Pending the final orders of the Government of Bombay, he assumed charge of the effects of the late *desai* and the management of Kittur. This was highly resented by the members of the *desai's* family who naturally desired to keep the estate in their own hands. Thackeray, as a precautionary measure, sealed the treasury and placed a small guard at the inner gate of the fort. Thackeray himself, with two of his assistants and a small escort, a company of Native Horse Artillery, and one of Native Infantries, were encamped without the walls of the fort. Things appeared quiet till October 21 when Thackeray demanded of the treasury guards a bond rendering themselves responsible for the treasury. They refused to execute the bond, and two days later, insurgents, about 5,000 in number, closed the gates of the fort. When Thackeray proceeded to force the gates open, "the garrison rushed forth in such over-powering numbers as to overwhelm the party. Thackeray himself and three military officers were killed, and two European Assistants to the Collector and some Indian officers were taken and carried into a fort."

"The excitement occasioned by this transaction rapidly spread, and the people of the country between the Malprabha and Kittur manifested a disposition to join the insurgents. In order to prevent the spread of the rebellious spirit, a strong force, consisting of troops sent from Madras and Bombay, besieged the fort. The insurgent leaders, twelve in number, surrendered themselves on condition that their lives should be spared, the rebellion subsided, the ladies of the *desai's* family were imprisoned in the Bail-Hongal fort, and Kittur lapsed to the British Government."

Five years later, in 1829, another rebellion broke out at Kittur under the leadership of Rayappa, a village watchman of Singoli who

had taken part in the outbreak of 1824. He took up the cause of the adopted boy whose claim was set aside by Thackeray, and declared for the restoration of independence of Kittur. Soon Rayappa had a large following, who carried on systematic depredations in the neighbouring regions. As the disorder spread, even the Kittur militia refused to serve and regular troops had to be employed. But though isolated bands of insurgents were occasionally defeated, Rayappa evaded the British force till he was betrayed by one of his rivals who had joined him as a friend. He was condemned to death and was publicly hanged. An unfortunate episode occurred during the outbreak. The Government removed the widow of the late *desai* to Dharwar, although an excited mob resisted her removal. She died there in July 1829, presumably from the effect of poison.[24]

The reactions of the Burmese War also affected the Indian States and reference has already been made above, in Chapter III, to the cases of Alwar and Bharatpur.

4. *Revolts due to annexation or deposition of rulers*

Some of the outbreaks directly followed as a consequence of the policy of annexation. This is illustrated by the constant revolt of the nobility and the primitive hill tribes of Assam after its annexation by the British, to which detailed reference has been made elsewhere.[25]

The serious rebellious outbreak at Sambalpur falls under this head. After the conclusion of the Third Maratha War, Sambalpur came under the suzerainty of the British by the Treaty of 1826. Jait Singh, the old ruler, imprisoned by the Marathas, was restored to the throne by the British in 1818, but he died shortly after, and after a short rule by British officers Maharaj Sai was appointed his successor in 1820. On his death in 1827, his widow Mohan Kumari was permitted to succeed him. But there were other claimants to the throne, the chief among them being Surendra Sai. The pretenders to the throne caused serious disturbances, so much so that a regular force had to be sent against them. The Rani was deposed and removed to Cuttack, and Narayan Singh was set up as the ruler in 1833. But the old disturbances continued, and the situation was rendered worse by the rising of the Gonds under Balabhadra Deo (or Sai), Zamindar of Lakhanpur. It was long before normal condition could be restored. But in 1839-40 Surendra Sai, the old pretender to the throne, again created serious disturbances. At last he was arrested with his brother Udwant Sai and uncle Balaram Singh for murdering the Zamindar of Rampur, and all the three were sentenced to life imprisonment.[26a]

Further illustration is afforded by the constant popular outbreaks in Burma after the Second Burmese War. This is particularly significant as it falsifies the British pretension that the British rule was welcomed by the people of Burma. There was an outbreak at Salween, led by a Karen, which "plunged the country into a state of anarchy", and in Syriam "there were numerous outbreaks of guerilla warfare and even more seriously sustained rebellions". Bassein was captured by rebels on April 18, 1852. So strong was the anti-British feeling that villages were destroyed for the offence of supplying fuel to the British steamers, and "none dared accept office under the new government". There was a general rebellion in 1854, and the leaders proclaimed that they had been commissioned (by the Burmese Government of Ava) to drive out the English. The upper part of the district was in possession of the rebels and the British forces had to fight hard against them before the revolt was suppressed. In 1857 the Karens took up arms against the British authority in Martaban. In 1858 a body of men, led by a fisherman of Twante (Hanthawaddy District), broke into rebellion.[26]

The most serious outbreak in Burma was the one led by Gaung Gyi at Tharrawaddy. He collected an army of 1500 men, consisting mostly of the disbanded Burmese troops, and attacked the town of Monyo in March, 1853. The town was destroyed and Gaung Gyi set up a parallel government of his own with headquarters at Tapun. He then crossed the Irrawaddy river and carried on depredations in the Henzada District. This led to a general disorder and the British official report admitted that a large tract of the country was in successful rebellion against the Government. The whole of Tharrawaddy was dominated by Gaung Gyi and the British administration there was completely paralyzed. "Gaung carried out a wholesale destruction of every village round Tapun in the very presence of British pickets and established a reign of terror throughout the whole area". The British army was mobilised and after strenuous efforts drove Gaung Gyi to the hills. Gyi ultimately crossed the frontier of British territory to Burma. On the news of the outbreak of 1857 in India, preparations were again made for an outbreak when Gaung Gyi was shot dead, in course of a skirmish, by the Burmese authorities[27]

A revolt broke out in the district of Henzada in 1852, shortly after its occupation by the British. Nga Myat Htun, the leader of the revolt, collected an army and carried on plundering raids over the whole country including the district of Maubin. Early in 1853 he defeated the British troops led by Captain Loch, but was soon routed by stronger British forces.[28]

Some of the disturbances or violent outbreaks may be regarded as the result of arbitrary deposition of popular rulers. The deposition and banishment of Pratap Singh, Raja of Sātārā, to which reference has been made above,[29] was followed by a wave of discontent all over the country, and a chain of disturbances in 1840-41, particularly in the region round Sātārā. These are popularly known as Dhar Rao's 'Bunds' (rebellions) because they were first inspired and organized by Dhar Rao Powar of Karad. He and his associates were responsible for a series of petty skirmishes which were easily suppressed (1840). Greater importance attaches to the rebellion of Narsing Dattatraya Petkar, who is said to have met Pratap Singh when he was being taken to Banaras. Narsing, though blind of one eye, travelled widely and collected a band of Arabs and Rohillas. With a force of about 1,000 men he seized the fort of Badami in 1841 by a surprise attack, and announced by beating of *tom tom* that the place belonged to the Maharaja of Sātārā. He hoisted the flag of the Raja of Sātārā and took up the administration of the locality. After about four days the British troops arrived on the scene. Narsing and his men fought till all the bullets and ammunition were spent. Narsing was sentenced to death, but in consideration of his blindness the sentence was changed to transportation for life.[30]

The evils of the annexation were seen in the large number of unemployed soldiers. Captain Duff summed up the situation as follows in 1832: "In the Peishwa's territories in the Deccan, the risk of internal disturbances became considerable. A vast body of unemployed soldiery were thrown upon the country, not only of those who had composed the Peishwa's army, both Mahrattas and foreigners, but those of the disbanded armies of Holkar, Scindia and the Rajah of Berrar..... They were ready to join, not merely in any feasible attempt to overthrow our power, but in any scheme which promised present plunder and anarchy".[31]

This is well illustrated by the revolt of the Ramosis. These once served in the inferior ranks of police in the Maratha administration. Chittur Singh, who revolted in Sātārā in 1822 as a protest against heavy assessment, gathered these Ramosis under his banner, and they played a prominent part in plundering the country and destroying its forts. In 1825 scarcity in Poona and reduction in the local garrison severely distressed them, and they broke into revolt in 1826 under the leadership of Umaji. For three years they scoured the country. Ultimately the Government pacified them by not only condoning their crimes but by land-grants and recruiting them as hill police.[32]

5. *Revolts against new administrative system*

Some of the outbreaks were the direct result, not so much of British annexation as of the introduction of British system of administration. This is illustrated by the risings in Kolhapur and Savantvadi, two Maratha States in Bombay. These two States, along with others, passed under the supremacy of the British as a result of the Third Maratha War. The British relations with these two States had been greatly strained for a long time owing to piratical practices of the people which caused injury to British trade. The British entered into several agreements claiming compensation for injuries, surrender of ports and territory, reduction of arms, and various commercial privileges. As repeated armed interference did not produce the desired effect, the British took over the direct administration of these States. Though the ruler was nominally retained, he had no power.

Early in 1844, Dajee Krishna Pandit, a member of the Bombay Civil Service, was appointed minister of Kolhapur, but he was made accountable to the British Political Agent alone. He introduced reforms in accordance with the British system, which were resented by the privileged classes of the old regime. The commercial privileges enjoyed by the British aroused the hostility of the trading classes. These elements spread discontent against the British among the soldiery and the common people, and excited them to rise in armed revolt. Some of the measures introduced by D. K. Pandit specially irritated the Gadkaris of Kolhapur. These were military classes who garrisoned Maratha forts and enjoyed lands for their service. After the Third Maratha War their services were dispensed with, and they had to pay revenues for the lands they held. This was a cause of great irritation as the Gadkaris were very jealous of their proprietary rights on lands. D. K. Pandit took away some other privileges of the Gadkaris, such as allowances for goats at Dussera and money presents at Diwali, and also began the counting of jack-trees and houses for taxation. All these highly irritated the Gadkaris and matters were brought to a head when D. K. Pandit reduced the number of Mamlatdars from 23 to 6. This reform was disliked by the Gadkaris as they were attached to their hereditary Mamlatdars, and they now feared that all their privileges and rights would be gradually taken away. Being encouraged by the sympathy of the people and promises of help by the nobility, and further encouraged by the report of paucity of British troops, the Gadkaris broke into open revolt in September, 1844, and closed the gates of the forts of Bhudargadh and Samangadh against the newly appointed Mamlatdars. The repulse of the British force who attacked the fort

of Samangadh and the delay in recapturing the two forts provoked a rebellion in the city of Kolhapur. On October 4, 1844, the *Patucks* and *Sibandis*—a kind of local militia—joined the rebellion, and with the help of the palace guards seized D. K. Pandit and other officers who were favourable to British interests. The Diwan Sahib, the late Regent, and the nobles now openly espoused the cause of the rebels. Some old ministers who had been turned out by the British were recalled and took charge of the administration. These events turned the rising of the Gadkaris into a general popular revolt against the British. All the forts in the Kolhapur State were in a state of revolt, and insurgents began to raid adjoining British districts. Extensive military measures had to be taken before the situation was brought under control. The principal forts were retaken by the end of 1844 and complete tranquillity was restored by February, 1845.[33]

The seriousness of the outbreak may be judged by the following summary of the Sātārā Residency Records:

"In October 1844 the insurgents imprisoned Daji Pandit, the Karbhari of Kolhapur and took possession of the city. Postal communications from Belgaum were cut off by them. Subhana Nikam reached Samangad with 500 insurgents and cut off all communications south of the Panchganga. The rebels captured the forts of Pannala and Pavangad Raoji Waknis and Dinkarrao Gaikwad raised a standard of rebellion and placed guards round the town of Kolhapur and controlled all the communications. The rebellion gathered force and many people started co-operating with them.

"Vishalgadkar also joined the rebellion. The treasury of Chiodi was plundered by the rebels, who killed Government's guards, liberated the prisoners and burnt all Government records. The Government officers fled from the place

"The fort of Samangad was captured by the rebels on the morning of 13th October. Colonel T. Ovans left charge of Satara in favour of Captain Hart on 12th November, 1844 and went to the Kolhapur war area. But he was taken prisoner on his way to Kolhapur and kept a captive for some weeks at the fort of Pannala. He was released by British forces and resumed charge of Satara Residency on 20th January, 1845 "[33a]

The events in Kolhapur had their repercussions on Savantvadi whose people had already revolted against the British in 1830, 1832, and 1836. In 1838 the British Government deposed the Raja, Khem Savant, for his inability to maintain order, and appointed a European Political Superintendent to administer the State. He was supported

by a local corps under British officers. The discontented nobles fled to Goa, across the frontier, and planned revolt against the British. In 1839 they very nearly succeeded in seizing the fort of Vadi. The popular discontent was very acute and the initial success of the revolt in Kolhapur led to a similar revolt in Savantvadi by the garrisons of Vadi and Manohar forts. By the middle of December, 1844, the whole State was in full revolt and the British authority was confined to the town and the few military posts in the State. The rebels received support from Goa, and were helped in every way by the people. "A detachment under Major Benbow was paralysed But Lieut. Col. Outram with four companies of the 11th regiment Native Infantry defeated the insurgents in the Akeri pass. The position of the rebels was immensely strengthened when Phond Savant, a leading noble of great power, and his eight sons joined the disaffected elements. Even Anna Sahib, the heir-apparent, made a common cause with the rebels by assuming a pompous royal style, and collecting revenues from villages. The insurgents consequently became so bold that they also opened negotiations with the officers of the tenth regiment. By 1845, the whole country was in utter disorder; there was no security even in places near British outposts".[34] Martial law was proclaimed on 14 January, 1845. By the end of the month the backbone of the revolt was broken by the reduction of the forts of Manohar and Mimtoshghar and tranquillity was restored by the middle of the year

There were similar revolts in the District of Vizagapatam. The British Government had taken charge of the estate of the Rauze family in 1827 and settled a pension of one hundred rupees per month on the person of Birabhadra Rauze. In order to compel the Government to increase the pension to three hundred rupees, Birabhadra gathered round him a body of adventurers who laid waste the neighbouring region. A price of Rs. 1,000 was put on his head in August, 1830, and it was later increased to Rs. 5,000; but to no effect. Martial law was proclaimed in 1832, but the disturbances did not die down till the capture of Birabhadra in January, 1833.[35] Similar troubles were created by Jagannath Rauze in Suttivarain and Ankapilly estates in 1832 which continued for nearly two years.

There was also an outbreak in the Palkonda estate in 1831, a legacy of a similar rising in 1827, both being due to the attachment of the property of the Zamindar for non-payment of revenue. Predatory bands from the hills plundered and burnt villages even in the neighbourhood of Palkonda, and bodies of armed men attacked military pickets. Martial law was declared in 1832, and when the re-

bellion was suppressed in 1832, Palkonda estate was declared forfeited to the Government.[36]

Far more serious was the rebellion of Dhananjaya Bhanja, Zamindar of Gumsur in Ganjam District. Unable to clear up the arrears of revenue, he openly revolted and took refuge in his Kolaida fortress. The Government resumed the Zamindary and sent a force against the refractory Zamindar. Gumsur was occupied on 3rd November, 1835, and Kolaida on the 9th. Martial law was proclaimed on November 12. The British troops were strongly opposed and harassed throughout their march, and the situation was thus described by the Collector: "The authority of Government is only acknowledged in this District where the influence of the troops extends,—the neighbouring zamindars, the Hill Chiefs, the Sirdars, the inhabitants of the country as far as I can judge, and, in many instances I suspect, our own public servants are adverse to the downfall of Gumsur family and the establishment of the power of Government..... We have been, and are still obliged to draw every article of supply from a very great distance ..... The enemy in small parties.. . commit outrages upon such villages or individuals as are suspected of being friendly to our cause . The object of all parties here is to have a Raja and unless Government is prepared to establish and maintain its power by force, I at present see little hope of a return to tranquillity but by establishing a Rajah".[37]

This description would be justly applicable to most of the recalcitrant estates. But the British Government, in most cases, chose the path of ruthless suppression instead of conciliation. When the rebellion assumed serious proportions, Mr. Russell was appointed Commissioner with full discretionary power to deal with the situation. He arrived at Gumsur on 11th January, 1836, and conducted a military campaign on a vast scale in which two Colonels, one Lieut. Colonel, three Majors, eleven Captains, and eleven Lieutenants took part. The Khonds joined the rebellion. They attacked the British force, cut off small British escorts, and blocked the passage of British troops by felling trees. Thus the war lasted till February, 1837.[38]

The Zamindari of Parlakimedi was attached for arrears in 1829 and placed under the Court of Wards. The Zamindar, Jagannath Gajapati Narayan Deo, mobilized his peons (household troops) and tributary hill-chiefs, and broke into revolt. Soon there was a general rising of the people who committed wide-spread depredations. The insurgents, hiding in jungles and protected by a number of forts, stubbornly held for a long time against the British detachments, but were ultimately overpowered in 1835 after their forts were reduced one after another.[39]

The rising of the Bundela landowners, Madhukar Sha and Jawahir Singh, in Sagar in 1842 was also due to the assessment of land. They broke into rebellion, killed police officers and plundered several towns. This emboldened others to rise against the British. Dalen Sha, a Gond Chief of Narsinghpur, plundered Deori and neighbouring regions, and depredations continued for a year before the country was pacified.[40]

In 1846-7 Narasimha Reddi, the descendant of dispossessed poligar of Kurnool, broke into rebellion as the Government refused to pay him the lapsed pension. He gathered a band of adventurers, estimated between 4000 and 5,000, and ravaged the country-side of Bellary and Kurnool for three months. He defied law and order and offered battle to Lieut. Watson. He was however caught and hanged in 1847.[41]

The evils of the British revenue system also led to outbreaks in the District of Sandoway, newly acquired from the king of Burma. The people and the headmen of revenue-circles, called Thugyis, were exasperated by the excessive demands and, in 1829, Maung Tha U, the Thugyi of Alegyaw circle, broke into open rebellion. At the head of a large body of discontented men he marched on Sandoway. Captain Gordon, who tried to repulse them, was killed. The rebels burned the police post and committed depredations on a large scale. Military operations were necessary and the insurrection did not end till the end of the year 1830. Similar outbreaks, though less serious in character, took place at Tavoy and Mergui in Tenasserim [42]

6. *Revolts of the primitive tribes*

A number of outbreaks, sometimes of a serious character, were due to the natural reluctance of primitive tribes, mostly living in hilly regions, to be brought under a regular system of British administration. This was illustrated by the risings of the various tribes in the north-east corner of Assam to some of which reference has been made above.[43]

Some of the hill-tribes, however, dreaded the idea of slow penetration of the British into their country. They hated the *feringhees* and their rule and were bitterly opposed to the extension of their political and cultural influence in their immediate neighbourhood. A typical example of this is furnished by the conduct of the Khasis, a primitive tribe who occupied the hilly region between Jaintia on the east and the Garo Hills on the west. These three regions operated as a mountain barrier between the Brahmaputra valley or Lower Assam on the north, and the Surma valley or plains of Sylhet on the south.

Sylhet had come into the possession of the British by the Diwani grant of 1765, and during the eighties and nineties of the eighteenth century, there were many depredations committed by the Khasis in British territory. The Khasis remained quiet for a quarter of a century, but the reported discomfitures of the British during the First Burmese War emboldened them to resume their depredations which were put down without much difficulty.[44]

As the result of the Burmese War the British got possession of the Brahmaputra valley, as mentioned above.[46] Mr. Scott, the Political Agent of Assam, conceived the idea of linking up this territory with Sylhet by a road passing through the entire length of the Khasi domains It would considerably reduce the length of the military route between the two regions and give the British a strong grip over the Khasis who frequently created troubles. For this purpose treaties were concluded in 1827 with various Khasi chiefs among whom the territory was divided, the most renowned among them being Tirut Singh, the Chief of Nunklow. The construction of the road was, however, a matter of dispute. The British included it in the treaty, but the Khasi Chiefs strongly disliked the idea. A Bungalow was erected at Nunklow to serve as a sanatorium, and arrangements were made for the construction of the road, and these resulted in the presence of a number of Englishmen and Bengalis in the hills. Their arrogant attitude towards the Khasis was highly resented by the latter. The conscription of labourers for making the road was the occasion for much irritation on both sides. While the presence of these foreigners with radically different ideas and customs caused discontent, and some amount of nervousness, to the simple hill-folk, Tirut Singh, the Chief, was displeased at the refusal of the British to offer him help to which he believed, he was entitled under the terms of the treaty. Further, Tirut Singh felt that the pomp and grandeur of the British officers and the big buildings constructed by them in his territory offered such a strong contrast to the simple life of the people that he was sure to be lowered in their estimation. There were also specific cases of complaint on both sides, the truth of which it is not easy to determine.

The cumulative effect of all these was a grim determination on the part of the Khasi Chiefs to drive away the "lowland strangers" from their country. There were about 30 States in Khasi hills each of which was a republic in miniature, under a Chief and an Assembly comprising all adult male members. The Chiefs of various States invited Tirut Singh to make a general inroad into Assam and expel the British from the plains as well as the hills. The leader of this movement was Bar Manik, the Chief of Molim, one of these petty

Khasi States. Mr. Scott got an inkling of all this and made preparations to seize Bar Manik with the help of the Sylhet local corps. But in the meantime the insurrection had already begun on a large scale. On 5 May, 1829, a strong party of Khasis, aided by the Garos, raided Nunklow and massacred the European and Bengali inmates of the sanatorium. Lt. Bedingfield was killed on the spot, and though the other European escaped, he was seized on the way and cut off. No harm was done to the Assamese inmates.

The Khasis then burnt the Bungalow, released the convicts employed in the construction of the road, and proceeded towards Cherrapunji in search of Mr. Scott. It was "the signal of an almost universal rising among the Khasi chiefs," and the hill people in thousands joined the standard of revolt. The rebellion also spread to the Garo hills whose people joined the Khasis. Tirut Singh sent messages to the Bhots, Singphos and other hill-tribes, exciting them to throw off the yoke of the English. He even exhorted Chandrakānta,[46] the ex-king of Assam, to rise against the British.

The British forces burnt Khasi villages, one after another, and established a sort of "economic blockade" prohibiting all trade and intercourse with the Khasis. Tirut Singh and his associates, with a military force estimated to be 10,000 strong, evaded the British, but occasionally swooped down upon the plains, causing alarm all over Assam. Once the panic was so great even in Gauhati, the headquarters of the British, that large number of people, including high officials, kept boats ready to evacuate at a moment's notice.

The long and harassing warfare with the Khasis continued for four years. There is no doubt that whatever may be its origin it gradually developed into a general insurrection, and it was the last fight of the confederacy of Khasi Chiefs to keep the British out of their country. But in the end they failed. Tirut Singh surrendered in January, 1833, on condition that his life should be spared, and his territory was restored to his nephew under certain conditions. Most of the other Chiefs had submitted to the British authority by the end of 1832.[47]

The Khasi rebellion had far-reaching consequences. While the British were engaged in a harassing warfare with them, the Singphos[48] broke into open rebellion in 1830 under a Khamti Chief. The simultaneous rebellions of the Khasis and Singphos gave the discontented nobility of Assam another opportunity to strike a blow for their independence. The embers of the rebellion under Gadadhar in 1828, to which reference has been made above,[49] had not yet died down. Haranath, the son of the ex-Bar Gohain who took part in the first rebellion, organized the second rebellion of the nobility

and planned to act in concert with the rebellious Khasis and Singphos. The nobility set up one Kumar Rupchand as their Raja, and sent envoys to the Chiefs of the Khamtis, Moamaris, Nagas and Garos, calling upon them all to rise against the British. On 25 March, 1830, they attacked the military lines at Rangpur (in Assam), but failed and were put to flight. The leaders were apprehended and some of them hanged.[60]

The Singpho rebellion, however, proved to be more serious More than three thousand rebels, armed with muskets, spears and swords, marched against Sadiya and erected stockades; but they were defeated by Capt. Neufville on 27 February, and again on March 11, 1830. Though defeated, the Singphos remained in a mood of sullen discontent, and again rose into rebellion in 1839, in course of which Col. White, the British Political Agent, lost his life and eight others were killed or wounded.[61]

In 1835, Tagi Raja, the Chief of the Kapaschor Akas, stirred up the hill people to rise against the British. He killed a number of British subjects and attacked the police outpost at Balipara. He was not subdued till 1842.[62]

The Nagas broke out into insurrection in 1849 and killed the Indian officer in charge of a police outpost at a village near Dimapur. A strong British force brought the situation under control in 1850-51.

The Kukis, a wild tribe, had the strange custom of burying their deceased rulers along with human heads. They lived in the Lushai hills and the hill regions of Manipur and Tippera, and raided both Sylhet and Cachar for taking human heads. In 1826, and again in 1844 and 1849, the Kukis raided British territory, killed a number of men, and took their heads, with the result that South Cachar was almost deserted and the people moved to the north. Military raids against them in sufficient strength were not regarded by the British officers as feasible, as the Kuki Chiefs could raise 7000 men to defend the narrow mountain passes. A Kuki levy was accordingly raised to protect the British territory, and in 1850 many Lushai Chiefs submitted to the British authority of their own accord.

The Kolarian tribes of Chota Nagpur, accustomed to lead their free lives without any control, could ill brook the gradual extension of British authority in their territory. These tribes were ruled by petty chieftains, called Raja, who proudly claimed to have exercised independent authority for more than fifty generations. The British occupation of Singhbhum was highly resented by the Raja, who was known as the Raja of Porahat. His subjects, the Hos, zealously

guarded the frontiers and would not allow any strangers to enter into their territory. Though the Raja agreed to pay annual tribute to the British, the Hos remained recalcitrant. The Political Agent, Major Roughsedge, entered Kolhan and Chaibasa in 1820, but met with a fierce resistance. Lieut. Maitland also had a similar experience, and we are told that "these savages, with a degree of rashness and hardihood scarcely credible, met the charge of the troops half way in open plain, battle-axe in hand". It was not till 1827, after many villages were burnt and a large number of Hos were killed, that they submitted. But they merely bided their time to rise again, and when the Mundas of Chota Nagpur broke out into revolt in 1831, the Hos joined them. This insurrection was caused by the new policy of farming revenue to outsiders, and the introduction of judicial and revenue regulations of the Bengal Government into the country. The rebellion soon spread over a considerable area, including Ranchi, Hazaribagh, Palamau and Manbhum. "Violence and pillage were universal and indiscriminate........ The villages are fired, the roads are blocked up, and all passers are plundered."[53] The wrath of the rebels was specially vented upon the foreign settlers, about a thousand of whom were killed or burnt in their homes. The military forces found it difficult to control the situation. "On one occasion a squadron of cavalry encountering a body of six or seven thousand of the rioters was compelled to retire with some small loss".[54] After extensive military operations the insurrection was suppressed in March, 1832. A few cases of unexampled bravery are on record. Some of the ringleaders fought to the last, and one, Buddho Bhagat, rather than surrender, perished with his whole family and 150 followers in defending his village. The insurrection was marked by ruthless severities on both sides, and Shore estimated that nearly five thousand square miles of territory had been almost laid waste in crushing the resistance of the Kols. The Hos continued to be refractory, and military operations had to be undertaken in 1836 and 1837 before they submitted to the British authority.[55]

Immediately following the Kol rising, there broke out the rebellion of the Bhumij in Manbhum, in 1832, under Ganganarayan, a disappointed claimant to the Barabhum estate. There was a long family feud between Ganganarayan and Madhab Singh, the Diwan of the estate. "Ganganarayan gathered a large force of ghatwals (keepers of the hill passes) and strengthened his position by attaching himself to the peasantry, who were also alienated by the exactions and excessive demands of the diwan. On 2 April, 1832, Madhab was attacked and murdered: the murderous gang then proceeded to plunder the whole country: Barabazar, a town of import-

ance, was sacked, and all Government offices such as the Munsiff's cutcheri, police thana and the salt Darogha's cutcheris were burnt down. With his levies, which included the Chuars and numbered between two and three thousand men, he attacked Government troops. The situation became so threatening that in the first week of June, 1832, government force had to retire to Bankura leaving Barabhum to the possession of the rebel chief. Ganganarayan assumed the title of raja, and levied contributions from the surrounding country". Soon Ganganarayan began to plunder all the estates to the east of Barabhum. The Bhumij Kols of the district joined him and the situation became fraught with danger. Different bands of British troops scoured the country towards the end of 1832, and the death of Ganganarayan, shortly after, put an end to the insurrection.[56]

The Khonds, a wild tribe occupying a large tract of territory called Khondmals, in the southern part of Baud, and neighbouring regions in Orissa, were notorious for infanticide and human sacrifices called Meriah sacrifice.[57] The British attempt to suppress these inhuman practices,[58] added to a belief that the British would appropriate their lands, exact forced labour, and impose taxes, etc., made the Khonds to break into an open rebellion in 1846. They surprised the camp of Capt. Macpherson and compelled him to surrender 170 Meriahs (intended victims for sacrifice) kept in his charge. Though beaten in a fight with Madras sepoys in April, 1846, one Chakra Bisayi, the nephew of an exiled Chief, organized a rebellion at the end of the year The Khonds of Gumsur and the neighbouring regions joined the revolt which soon became a general insurrection of the Khonds and lasted for three years. "Villages were burnt, strong places occupied, jungles scoured by troops; but the Khonds, undaunted by defeat, held out in the depths of their highland lairs".[59] When, in 1848, the rebellion was suppressed, the exiled Khond Chief was recalled and placed at the head of Khonds. This wise step pacified the Khonds, but Chakra Bisayi and his followers kept up the fight and organized another rebellion in Gumsur in 1855 They, however, made it clear that they fought, not for maintaining the Meriah sacrifice which they decided to give up, but for the preservation of their rights and privileges which, they believed, were in danger. The Raja of Baud, unable to subdue his refractory subjects, the Khonds, made over the territory to the British administration (1855).[60]

The Santals, who have given their name to an area in Bihar adjoining to Murshidabad (in Bengal) on the west, were a primitive but very industrious people They were forced to migrate from their ancestral lands on account of the excessive demands of the Zamin-

dars after the Permanent Settlement, and occupied the plains skirting the Rajmahal Hills, after clearing the forests with great industry and labour. But the oppressions of the *mahajans* and traders from Bengal and Upper India, who lent them money at excessive interest and illegally recovered ten times their unjust dues, exactions of the police and revenue officials, dispossession of lands by the Zamindars, and the insults and indignities they suffered from the Englishmen goaded them into rebellion.[61] The dishonour to their women by the 'Sahiblok' specially irritated them.

The Santal rebellion of 1855-6 was marked by some of the worst features of elemental tribal passions and open denunciation of British rule. But it was primarily, perhaps mainly, due to economic causes, and there was no anti-British feeling at the beginning of the outbreak. The main grievances of the Santals were against the "civilised people" from Bengal and Upper India who swarmed their country and took advantage of their simplicity and ignorance to exploit them in a ruthless manner. They turned against the Government when they found that instead of remedying their grievances, the officers were more anxious to protect their oppressors from their wrathful vengeance. The Santals were exasperated "when those among them who had made night-attacks on the houses of some of the *mahajans* were tried and punished, while their oppressors were not even rebuked".[62] Under the leadership of two brothers, Sidhu and Kanhu, who are said to have divine revelation, ten thousand Santals met in June 1855, and declared their intention 'to take possession of the country and set up a Government of their own'. Sporadic depredations commenced immediately, but the movement assumed a formidable aspect by the middle of July, 1855. They assembled in different parts in parties of 10,000 each, cut off the postal and railway communications between Bhagalpur and Rajmahal, and were in complete control of this area. The Santals proclaimed the end of the Company's rule and the commencement of the regime of their Subah. "Armed chiefly with axes and poisoned arrows, large bodies of these half-reclaimed savages carried fire and sword into scores of happy villages, attacked every outlying European Bungalow, murdered with equal readiness English planters and railway-servants, native police-officers, tradesmen, peasants, their wives and children, and even swarmed up to the larger European stations in the districts of Birbhum, Rajmahal and Bhagalpur".[63] They are even accused of "roasting Bengalis and ripping up their women".[64]

The authorities were taken utterly by surprise, and the panic-stricken natives fled by thousands. Even when troops were rushed

they could do little more than hold a few isolated posts. The Santals fled before the musketry, but found safe shelter in the thick jungles from which they could carry depredation. Some sepoy battalions fell back before them out of fear. A British force under Major Burrough was defeated, and the situation assumed "a very alarming aspect". The disturbed districts were handed over to the military and a regular campaign had to be conducted to suppress the rebellion. Even in August, the number of insurgents exceeded 30,000 men in arms. They showed no signs of submission and were openly at war with the British till February, 1856, when their leaders were arrested. Most inhuman barbarities were practised on the Santals after they were defeated.

7. *The religious cum political outbreaks.*

The most serious outbreak under this head was that of the Wahabis which will be dealt with in detail in Chapter XXIX. A minor instance is furnished by the Pagal Panthis, a semi-religious sect, whose members consisted mostly of the primitive tribes, Hajongs and Garos, living in the northern part of Mymensingh District, Bengal (now in E. Pakistan). Its founder was a *darvesh* or mendicant, called Karam Shah, but his son and successor, Tipu, was inspired by both religious and political motives. He consolidated his hold over the Garos and Hajongs by openly taking up their cause against the oppressions of the Zamindars who realized illegal cesses from them. He gathered round him a band of armed followers, and collected money by plunder. He then asked his followers not to pay rent above a specified minimum. In January, 1825, he led a mob of 700 and attacked and looted the houses of the Zamindars of Sherpur. The Zamindars fled to the headquarters of the Deputy-Collector, while Tipu stationed himself in an old fortified place and assumed royal powers. Tipu was soon captured, but the Government not only released him but conceded the justice of his demands, and made a more equitable arrangement to protect the cultivators. Though Tipu was again arrested in 1827, his followers, not satisfied with the new arrangements, took to arms in 1833, and collected a body of three thousand men armed with spears, swords, bows and a few matchlocks. They sacked the town of Sherpur, plundered the houses and set fire to the Police Station. The Magistrate applied for military force as the insurgents had taken complete possession of the whole region between Sherpur and Garo Hills, and begun to levy taxes from the cultivators. Military operations on a large scale were necessary before they could be put down.[65]

8. *Disturbances due to general discontent*

Sometimes serious disturbances broke out on such minor issues that the real causes must be sought for elsewhere, and will probably be found in the prevailing spirit of deep-rooted discontent due to a combination of political, economic and other causes. An apt illustration is furnished by the rising of the cultivators of Savda and Chopda in Khandesh in 1852. An order was issued in 1844 asking the landholders to provide stone boundary marks of their lands. When a revenue survey party under Davidson went to this region, there was a big demonstration against the order on the ground that neither stone nor labourers were available for the work. Although some civil and military officers came to help Davidson, he grew nervous at the numerical strength of the demonstrators, stopped the survey operation, and removed his camp five miles away. This was a signal for a popular rising. A mob of several hundreds surrounded the tents, and the European officers saved their lives by flight. A military force was called, but could not crush the popular spirit. The people of Erandol refused to lend their carts to the Government officers, intercepted their messengers, and even seized a Subadar-Major. The gates of the town were broken through by the military force and there was a mass arrest of leading men. But at Savda and Faizpur the people continued to be refractory. They set up a parallel Government and the *panchayet* collected revenue, punished criminals, and carried on the normal administrative business. The leaders and the people were overpowered by the military and the trouble ceased.[66]

Similar popular discontent was probably the root of risings which were ostensibly of political character. An impostor, pretending to be Appa Sahib, the exiled Raja of Nāgpur, succeeded in gathering round him a band of Rohillas and others numbering about 4,000 men, and declared war against the British in 1848. He was actively supported by a number of Hindu officials, but was soon defeated and killed.[67]

There was a similar outbreak at Rawalpindi in 1853, four years after the annexation of the Panjāb in 1849. One Nadir Khan declared a person to be Peshawara Singh, a reputed son of Ranjit Singh, mentioned above.[68] This prince really died several years ago, but it was alleged that he had escaped from the prison. A Hindu mendicant personified him and Nadir Khan organized a revolt in his favour, but it was shortly put down.[69]

9. *Violent mass agitation*

Unpopular official measures occasionally provoked violent mass demonstrations against the Government, though they did not lead

to actual insurrection. The agitation in Surat against the raising of salt duty from eight annas to one Rupee is a striking illustration. According to the official report, as soon as the new Salt Act came to be known on August 27, 1844, there was a considerable degree of excitement among the poorer classes. "This gradually increased throughout the 28th and by the 29th had attained to such a height that the whole of the Hindu population.........assembled in front of the houses of the most influential sowcars and other inhabitants of the town, and by breaking their windows and demonstrations of violence obliged some of them to accompany the mob to Adalut (court) intending to petition the Sessions Judge who is Magistrate of the town At the same time the whole of the shops were closed".

As the police on duty in the court premises closed the gates, "the people became exasperated and commenced an attack on them, pelting the police with tiles", and a regular fight took place, but the people ceased offering violence even before the arrival of the military force Thereafter the mob was persuaded by some sowcars to return home peacefully But then a report was spread that the Government had imposed new cesses on various necessaries of life. The Government issued a proclamation denying this, and explaining the reason for enhancing salt duty. But even then, the next day, i.e. on 30 August, the people were in great excitement and almost all the shops were closed, mainly because. it was believed, of the excesses committed by the police. The authorities promised to hold an enquiry and hoped the disturbances would cease But this did not happen. The official report proceeds·—"Till this time the real character of the disturbances was not understood. They were generally supposed to be occasioned by the lowest classes of the Hindus......... Circumstances however soon transpired which gave rise to the belief that the disturbances were of a more serious nature, not only confined to one class of persons but *that the feeling of discontent was universal, from the highest to the lowest, and that instead of a common riot we were on the verge of an insurrection.*"

Crowds again assembled before the court, and had to be dispersed by force. But they "fell back towards the castle and joined the multitudes assembled there, which had by this time become exceedingly tumultuous, covering the whole esplanade to the edge of the ditch of the fort". One characteristic of the crowd was its strong anti-European spirit. European officers on the ramparts as well as European passers-by were pelted with bricks and tiles. The military drove away the crowd who kept up shouting "we will kill and be killed". The authorities became afraid of "a general rising of the whole population" and brought a gun into the castle. Being faced

with the alternatives of either reducing salt duty to the former rate or preparing to meet a regular insurrection, the authorities chose the former. The decision was met with "loud shout of approbation". In less than an hour shops opened and normal life was resumed.[70]

Surat was the scene of another agitation in 1848 when the Government decided to introduce Bengal Standard Weights and Measures. The people took resort to a sort of boycott and passive resistance in order to get the measure cancelled. It was announced by placards that the people of each caste had agreed to expel any one of their members who adopted the new weights. The shop-keepers closed their shops and leading members of every caste issued notices appealing to the people not to sell or give anything to the Government servants or to work for them until the matter was settled. Every day large crowds assembled and proclamations were issued on behalf of the people that they had subscribed Rs. 50,000 to contest the obnoxious measure up to the highest court in England; petitions signed by 5,000 persons were sent for cancelling the new measure. The resistance continued for a week, but in this case also the authorities had to yield to the popular demand.[71]

These two instances are significant in more ways than one In the first place, they anticipate the type of popular resistance to Government which became a common feature in India's struggle for freedom more than half a century later. Secondly, they show an attitude of the Government towards popular feeling which gradually underwent a change for the worse. This will be evident from the way in which similar agitation in Surat in 1860 over the Income Tax Act was ruthlessly suppressed by brute force. The *Bombay Times* remarked that "even in the trying year 1857, there was no act of firmness and wisdom more worthy to be recorded than this suppression of popular disaffection at Surat".[72] Evidently, the Sepoy Mutiny had turned the balance.

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1. Mill, VIII, 165.
2. For the hostilities of the Peshwa against the British, see Vol. VIII.
3. *SB*—I, 156-60.
4. For the account that follows, cf. Mill, VIII. 312 ff., *SB*—I, 162 ff.
5. Mill, VIII. 313.
6. Ibid, 315-6.
7. Ibid, 316, f. n.
8. Ibid, 315.
9. Mill, IX. 177.
10. Ibid, 179.
11. *SB*—I, 164.
12. *SB*—I, 175.
13. Mill, IX. 181 f. n.
14. Mill, IX. 165.
15. Mill, IX. 166; SB—I, 94-5.
16. Mill, IX. 166; SB—I, 177 f. n., 2.
17. Mill, IX. 167; SB—I, 175-6.

18. Mill, IX. 168.
19. Mill, IX. 168-9; SB—I, 176-7.
20. Mill, IX. 170; SB—I, 167.
21. *Bijapur DG*. 452; SB—I, 174.
22. Mill, IX. 174.
23. According to *SB*—I, 15, "the desai was raised to the position of an independent ruler."
24. Mill, IX. 171-3; SB—I, 153-55.
25. Cf. Chapter V and also section 6 of this chapter.
25a *Sambalpur DG*, pp. 25 ff.
26. *SB*—I, 191.
27. *SB*—I, 192-3.
28. *SB*—I, 194.
29. Cf. Chapter VI.
30. *Freedom Movement, Bombay*, I, 55-62, which contains interesting original records on the subject. For short accounts of Nursing's rebellion, cf. SB—I, 174; *Bijapur DG*, 452; these differ materially from the account given above on the authority of the original records.
31. *SB*—I, 136.
32. Ibid, 155.
33. The account is based on *PIHRC*, XIX. 68. A few new documents are published in *Freedom Movement, Bombay*, I. 63 ff. According to one of these, a statement of Bhide-Karkun before the Ratnagiri Magistrate, the general revolt was precipitated by an order from the British Government to keep the Raja and his brother in confinement. He further says that the garrison at Samangadh refused to pay revenues to the Mamlatdar appointed by D. K. Pandit, as they considered it derogatory, but they were willing to pay it to him Pandit thereupon asked for military force from Belgaum and thus the revolt began.
33a. *Freedom Movement, Bombay* I, 72
34. *SB*—I, 170; *PIHRC*, XIX. 70.
35. *SB*—I, 146.
36 *SB*—I, 148.
37. Russell, *Reports on the disturbances in the Zamindari of Goomsoor*, 15-16
38. *SB*—I, 148-52.
39. *SB*—I, 145.
40. *SB*—I, 178; *Sagar DG*, 24.
41. *SB*—I, 152; *Kurnool DG*, 41-2; *Cuddapah DG*, 51.
42. SB—I, 190-1.
43. Cf. Chapter V (Assam) and Chapter XXXII.
44. Lahiri, 72 ff.
45. See p. 107.
46. See pp 128, 140.
47. Lahiri, 72-99, SB—I, 102-5
48. See p. 140.
49. See p. 133.
50. Lahiri, 68 ff.
51. Lahiri, 102; SB—I, 110
52. *SB*—I, 110
53. Thornton, V. 202.
54 Ibid, 203
55. *SB*—I, 98; Shore, *Notes*, II, 97-8; Thornton, 202 ff.
56. *SB*—I, 101-2.
57. For an authentic and well-documented account of the Meriah sacrifice, which was performed with most revolting cruelties, cf. *BPP*, Vol. 42 (1931), pp. 30 ff.
58 These attempts were highly creditable and partially successful. It has been estimated that over 1500 victims destined for the Meriah sacrifice were saved between 1837 and 1854 The last Meriah sacrifice is said to have taken place in 1855(*CHI*, VI. 40; Trotter, I. 236-41).
59. Trotter, I. 77-9, 102-5.
60 There is a considerable literature on the Khond Rebellion. Cf. *SB—I*, 112; Trotter, I. 77 ff, 102 ff, 376; *Angul DG*, 28-31.
61 For the Santal rebellion, cf. K. K. Dutt, *The Santal Insurrection of 1855-7* (Calcutta, 1940); Trotter, I. 368-74; *SB—I*, 114-5. For a general account of

the Santals and their rebellion, cf. Hunter, *The Annals of Rural Bengal* pp. 210-258; for the heroic courage with which they fought, cf. 247-8.

62. Dutt, op. cit., 10. "You forced us to fight against you", said one of their leaders in the Birbhum jail. "We asked only what was fair, and you gave us no answer. When we tried to get redress by arms, you shot us like leopards in jungle" (Hunter, op. cit. 254).
63. Trotter, I. 369.
64. *SB*—I, 115.
65. *SB*—I, 105.
66. *SB*—I, 171-2.
67. SB—I, 178-9; *Yeotmal DG*, 37-8; Trotter, I. 223-4.
68. See p. 255.
69. *SB*—I, 180.
70. For a detailed account of the Surat agitation, cf *Freedom Movement, Bombay*, I. 1-16. The passages quoted are from an official letter reproduced in this volume (pp. 4-10). The italics are mine.
71. Ibid, 17-3.
72. Ibid, 21.

BOOK I.
POLITICAL HISTORY

PART II.
THE MUTINY AND THE REVOLT OF 1857-8

CHAPTER XV

THE OUTBREAK OF THE MUTINY, 1857

1. *Beginning of the Mutinous Spirit*

Early in January, 1857, a Brahman sepoy, belonging to one of the British regiments stationed at Dumdum, about five miles to the north of Calcutta, was walking leisurely to his '*chowka*'[1] to prepare his food, with his *lota* (water-pot, usually made of brass or bell-metal), full of water, in his hand. He was met on the way by a low-caste *khalasi*,[2] attached to the magazine at Dumdum, who asked him to let him drink from his *lota*. The sepoy, a high-caste Brahman, refused, saying: "I have scoured my *lota; you* will defile it by your touch". The *khalasi* rejoined, probably with some amount of pungency and not without some inner delight: "You think much of your caste, but wait a little, the *Sahib-log* (Englishmen) will make you bite cartridges soaked in cow and pork fat, and then where will your caste be?".[3] The explanation was not long in coming. Towards the end of the year 1856, the military authorities in India proposed to replace the old-fashioned musket by the Enfield Rifle which required a particular species of cartridge, greased with lard made from the fat either of the hog or of the ox.[4] These cartridges were being manufactured at Dumdum and therefore the *khalasi* was expected to know the details. To the consternation of the Brahman sepoy it was explained by the *khalasi* that the end of these cartridges had to be bitten off with teeth. Subsequent investigations have proved beyond doubt that the statement of the *khalasi* was true in every detail.[5]

The Brahman sepoy, terribly upset, lost no time in carrying the news to his comrades. The effect of the rumour can be easily understood by any one who knows anything about the religious ideas of the classes of people from whom the sepoys were recruited. To touch by the teeth the fat of the cow and the pig would violate the religious injunctions of both the Hindus and the Muslims. Further, the Hindu sepoys very rightly apprehended that by so doing they would not only pollute themselves beyond redemption, but would also be ostracised by their caste people. Those who know anything of the Hindu society in those days would readily agree that this fear was not only not unfounded, but would weigh even more heavily with many of them.

The rumour about the greased cartridges produced consternation among the sepoys at the cantonment at Barrackpur, 15 miles from Calcutta, and they, along with their native commissioned officers, placed the matter before the authorities. Hearsey, the General commanding at Barrackpur, was so much impressed with the gravity of the situation, that he recommended that the sepoys might be allowed at the depot to grease their own cartridges. The Government accepted this suggestion on 27th January, and "transmitted orders by telegraph to the Adjutant-General to issue only cartridges free from grease, and to permit the sipahis to do the greasing themselves". The Adjutant-General "wired back that the concessions of the Government would rouse the very suspicion they were intended to allay; that for years past the sipahis had been using greased cartridges, the grease being mutton fat or wax; and that he begged that the system might be continued". The Government "replied that the greased cartridges might be issued, provided the materials were only those mentioned by the Adjutant-General".[6]

It was also suggested by responsible Englishmen, outside the army, that a representative body of the sepoys might be taken to the manufacturing depots so that they might see with their own eyes the whole process of preparing the cartridges.[7] But this eminently reasonable suggestion was not acted upon The Government did not evidently realize the depth of the feeling that excited the sepoys; in any case, they did nothing that might allay the suspicion of the sepoys, who not only firmly believed that the fat of the cow and the pig was still being used, but, what was still worse, that this was being deliberately done to convert them into Christianity. Such suspicions, once roused, are very hard to remove and have a tendency to grow from more to more. It was not long before the effect of the rumour about the greased cartridges upon the minds of the sepoys could be clearly seen. Acts of incendiarism were reported from Barrackpur, as well as from Ranigunge where a wing of the Barrackpur regiment was stationed.[8] It was believed at the time, and since proved on reasonable evidence, that these were committed by the sepoys who "vented their rage by setting fire to public buildings and their officers' Bungalows". The feeling ran very high among the sepoys of the 34th N.I. stationed at Barrackpur[9] On February 18 and 25, two detachments of the 34th N.I. arrived in course of their routine duty at Berhampur, about 120 miles from Calcutta, where the 19th N.I. was located. There can be hardly any doubt that the men of the 34th communicated their feelings about the cartridge to those of the 19th. In any case, on the 26th evening the latter refused to receive their percussion

caps for the parade on the following morning on the ground that they were suspicious of the cartridges. As soon as the news reached Mitchell, the Commanding Officer, he 'hastened in hot passion to the sepoy lines' and rebuked them severely. This confirmed the suspicions of the sepoys, and at about midnight the regiment rose as one man, the sepoys loading their muskets and shouting violently. Mitchell wanted to use force against the sepoys, but yielded to the saner advice of the native officers. Next morning the excitement among the sepoys subsided. They fell in for parade and obeyed the orders as before.[10] The Government instituted a Court of Inquiry and, on their findings, "determined to treat it as a local incident, which had attained undue proportions owing to violent measures taken by Col. Mitchell. The Governor-General in Council, therefore, resolved to disband the 19th".[11]

The open defiance of authority by the 19th N.I. for the sake of their religion, even at the risk of sacrificing their all, put the other sepoys to a sense of shame and self-reproach, and served as an inspiration. Besides, the sepoys of the 34th N.I. very rightly felt that they were mainly responsible for the terrible disgrace which awaited the 19th N.I. Matters came to a head when Mangal Pandey, a sepoy of the 34th N.I., openly mutinied, single-handed.

On Sunday, 29 March, it was reported to Lieutenant Baugh, Adjutant of the 34th N.I., that a sepoy, named Mangal Pandey, had turned out in front of the quarter-guard of the regiment and fired at the sergeant-major. Baugh immediately galloped down to the lines. As soon as he arrived at the quarter-guard, a shot was fired and his horse fell under him. Seeing that Mangal Pandey was reloading, he fired, but missed. Then Baugh drew his sword and rushed in to secure Mangal Pandey, while the sergeant-major came to his aid. But Mangal Pandey severely wounded them with his sword, and both of them were knocked down by the treacherous blow of another sepoy. But a third sepoy, Shaikh Pultoo, came to their rescue. He held Mangal Pandey, and the two wounded English officers escaped. During all this time no other sepoy came to assist the officers or arrest Mangal Pandey. Meanwhile, General Hearsey, having heard the news, galloped to the place and saw, from a distance, Mangal Pandey striding up and down, vehemently calling upon his comrades "to join him to defend and die for their religion and caste." The General, accompanied by his two sons, reached the guard and ordered them to follow him. The men of the guard, after some hesitation, followed. As they approached, Mangal Pandey fired, but missed; then, having turned the muzzle of his gun towards his own breast he discharged it by the pressure of his foot. His self-

inflicted wound, though severe, was superficial, and he was conveyed to hospital. General Hearsey then reproached the men of the 34th Native Infantry for their passive demeanour. They answered in one voice, "He is mad; he has taken *bhang* (intoxicating drug) to excess." The General replied: "Could you not have seized him, and if he resisted, have shot him or maimed him?" They said he had loaded his musket. "What!" the General replied, "are you afraid of a loaded musket?" They remained silent, and when ordered by the General to go quietly to their lines, did so.[12] Thus closed the first important episode of the Mutiny, showing that, though a spirit of sullen resentment overpowered the minds of the sepoys, and they were prepared to disobey, even defy, orders, they were not yet ready for the extreme step of breaking into mutiny, and there was not as yet any concerted plan of action regarding it.

Mangal Pandey and the jamadar were tried and executed, and the 34th N.I., like the 19th, were disbanded. The dishonoured sepoys of these two regiments returned in a sullen mood to their distant homes in Avadh, there to spread the story of the cartridges greased with the fat of the cow and the pig, which was sure to excite the masses who would, not unnaturally, look upon these sepoys as martyrs in the cause of their religion.

It was apparent ere long that the contagion was far more widely spread than was at first imagined. Unerring evidence was daily accumulating to show that the discontent and mutinous spirit had affected the sepoys of the whole Bengal Army located in remote parts of India. The incidents of Barrackpur were repeated at Ambala, at the other end of the country, towards the end of March. Here, again, we find the same piteous appeal of the sepoys to save their caste and religion by withdrawing the greased cartridges, the sympathy of the local officers but opposition of the Central Government, followed by acts of incendiarism. Towards the end of April, a Sikh gave evidence "that the men had sworn to burn down every bungalow in the station in revenge of the order to use the cartridges".[13]

The same scene was enacted at Lakhnau shortly after. But here the situation grew more serious than mere incendiarism. On May 2, the 7th Oudh Regiment refused to bite the greased cartridges, saying that they must do as the rest of the army did. On May 3, it was reported that the sepoys had threatened to murder the officers. Henry Lawrence, the Chief Commissioner of Avadh, acted promptly and other Indian regiments co-operated with him. Most of the mutineers fled at his approach, and the rest laid down their arms when ordered to do so. The regiment was later disbanded.

Less than three months after the *khalasi* had told the Brahman sepoy the story of the greased cartridges, "it had become an article of faith with nine-tenths of the sepoys of Northern India".[14] In the meantime another rumour was spread to the effect "that the officers were mixing dust ground from the bones of cows with the flour for their men's use, and throwing it into the wells". It had such a firm hold on the men at Kanpur, where the price of flour soared very high, that they refused to touch a cheap supply sent specially from Mirat because they feared that it had been adulterated.[15] About the same time appeared the mysterious *chapati* (unleavened bread made of flour which formed the staple diet for men of Upper India). It was widely spread over a large area, and its meaning and significance will be discussed later.

2. *Mirat* (Meerut)

Mirat was a military cantonment situated about 40 miles to the north of Delhi. At this important military station there were two regiments of Native Infantry and one of Native Cavalry. As against these, the British troops consisted of a dragoon regiment, a battalion of Rifles, and bodies of horse and foot artillery, "forming altogether the strongest European force at any post in the North-Western Provinces".[16] Here, as elsewhere, the sepoys were excited by the rumours of greased cartridges and of bone-dust mixed with flour, and the usual acts of incendiarism followed. The matter came to a head when, on 24 April, 1857,[17] eighty-five troopers out of ninety, of the Third Cavalry, refused to touch the cartridges on the parade ground. They were tried by a Court martial and sentenced to ten years' imprisonment with hard labour, but the Commander of the Division reduced the sentence to half in the case of eleven of the younger offenders.

The sepoys were guilty of an offence which was solely due to their religious scruples. As will be related later, even the British Commander-in-Chief expressed the opinion that there was nothing to be surprised at the objection of the sepoys to use the greased cartridges.[18] Yet, for this offence, the sepoys were sentenced to penal servitude and treated as felons. But if the sentence was a heavy one, it was executed in a way that outraged every sense of decency. On May 9, the condemned men were led to the parade ground which was open to the public and attended by all the troops of the station, both native and European. The reader may get a fair idea of the scene from the following graphic account given by Kaye, the great historian of the Mutiny.

"Under a guard of Rifles and Carabineers, the Eighty-five were then brought forward, clad in their regimental uniforms—soldiers still; and then the sentence was read aloud, which was to convert soldiers into felons. Their accoutrements were taken from them, and their uniforms were stripped from their backs. Then the armourers and the smiths came forward with their shackles and their tools, and soon, in the presence of that great concourse of their old comrades, the Eighty-five stood, with the outward symbols of their dire disgrace fastened upon them. It was a piteous spectacle, and many there were moved with a great compassion, when they saw the despairing gestures of those wretched men, among whom were some of the very flower of the regiment soldiers who had served the British Government in trying circumstances and in strange places, and who had never before wavered in their allegiance. Lifting up their hands and lifting up their voices, the prisoners implored the General to have mercy upon them, and not to consign them to so ignominious a doom. Then, seeing that there was no other hope, they turned to their comrades and reproached them for quietly suffering this disgrace to descend upon them. There was not a Sepoy present who did not feel the rising indignation in his throat. But in the presence of those loaded field-guns and those grooved rifles, and the glittering sabres of the Dragoons, there could not be a thought of striking. The prisoners were marched off to their cells, to be placed under the custody of a guard of their own countrymen."[19]

The effect of this scene upon the other sepoys and the people at large has been described by many writers on the authority of contemporary accounts. The comrades of the condemned sepoys fully shared the views for which the latter were imprisoned. As Malleson puts it, "they had not been insensible to the reproaches which their ironed and shackled comrades had cast upon them as they marched off, prisoners, to the gaol".[20] Their passive acquiescence, they felt, would bring eternal infamy and disgrace upon them. That this was no mere idle fear is borne out by the fact that the people at large, and even some courtesans, taunted the sepoys for their pusillanimity. No wonder, therefore, that the excitement of the sepoys at Mirat was not merely of a passive character, as was the case in Barrackpur. As Forrest puts it, the troopers, "maddened by the spectacle, at once prepared for a revolt from the English rule, and in order to rescue their comrades resolved to dare the worst extremity".[21] The details of the plot are not exactly known, but it is generally held that the sepoys, belonging to all the regiments, held counsels together, and decided to rise in a body the very next day which, being a Sunday when the Europeans would be absent at the church, appeared to be very suitable for their purpose. On the other hand, there are grounds to believe that the outbreak was not definitely prearranged, but was precipitated on Sunday evening by the assemblage of the *Rifles* for church parade, when suddenly a cry was raised, "the Rifles and Artillery are coming to disarm all the native regiments", and the sepoys, followed by a mob, rushed wildly to their lines.[22]

Whatever may be the circumstances leading to the actual outbreak, there is no doubt that the lead was taken by the Third Cavalry, to which regiment the condemned sepoys belonged. On May 10, Sunday, at about sunset, when the British Rifles assembled for church parade, the Third Cavalry looked upon it as the signal for their own imprisonment. Immediately, several hundreds of them galloped to the jail and released not only their comrades but also its other inmates. Meanwhile the infantry regiments had grown restive, and their officers hastened to the lines to pacify them. They showed signs of submission, "when suddenly a trooper galloped past, and shouted out that the European troops were coming to disarm them".[23] One of the regiments, the 20th, immediately seized their muskets, but the other, the 11th, still hesitated. But at this juncture the Commanding Officer of the latter, Col. Finnis, who was remonstrating with his men, was fired upon by the men of the other regiment and was immediately killed. The 11th regiment at once joined the other mutineers.

Then followed a scene of indescribable horror and confusion. The sepoys were joined by the convicts released from jail and other goonda elements, and they all set out to slay the Europeans and burn and plunder their houses. They killed indiscriminately, not sparing even women or children, and blazing houses all around threw their lurid light upon the scenes of plunder and desecration. It is probable, however, that this nefarious work, continued throughout the night, was done mostly by the criminals and the goonda elements who are never found wanting to take advantage of such a situation to serve their personal ends and satisfy their criminal propensities. Howsoever one might apportion the guilt, Mirat set an example which was only too closely imitated, ere long, in numerous localities over a wide area. But, as will be shown later, the British troops were more than a match for their Indian colleagues, not only in military skill, but also in perpetrating such cruel deeds. The sepoys had sown the wind and the Indians reaped the whirlwind.

The sepoys at Mirat knew full well that they could be easily crushed by European troops of the station. So, immediately after the first orgies of murder and plunder were over, they sat together to deliberate over their future line of action. There was no question that they must immediately leave Mirat, but the place of retreat was debated upon for a long time. It is generally held by the historians of the Mutiny, that under a pre-arranged plan they marched towards Delhi almost immediately after the outbreak had begun. But according to the testimony of Munshi Mohanlal, the mutineers at Mirat had not at first any idea of coming to Delhi, and it was only decided after

a long deliberation and discussion which fully convinced them that the advantages of such a course were greater than those offered by any other. As Mohanlal says that he got this information from two sepoys of Mirat, it is reasonable to accept it in preference to the other view.[24]

The sepoys must have left Mirat during the early hours of the night, for when a few hours after the outbreak, the British army, after inordinate delay, had advanced to quell the disturbances, the sepoys were nowhere to be seen, either in the town or in the lines, and the soldiers could only wreak their vengeance on the unarmed plunderers alone. By an incredible folly, the British commander did not take any measure to pursue the fleeing sepoys who, throughout their march to Delhi during that critical night, was apprehending at every moment that they would be overtaken and overwhelmed by the British troops.

The sepoys of Mirat reached Delhi soon after day-break on the 11th of May. Those who arrived first went straight to the Red Fort, and requested Bahadur Shah to take the lead in the campaign which they had already begun. After a great deal of hesitation, Bahadur Shah at last agreed, and was proclaimed Emperor.[25] In the meantime, as more and more sepoys from Mirat arrived, the massacre of Europeans—men, women and children—began in full fury. There was no means of resistance, as both the civil and military authorities were taken completely unawares. Then the mutineers proceeded to the cantonment where the local sepoys joined them and cut off their own officers. Deserted by the sepoys, the remaining Europeans, both civil and military, fled from Delhi as best as they could, and in less than a week not one of them was left in that city. The great magazine, with its vast stores of ammunition, was blown up by the British officers themselves to prevent it from falling into the hands of the mutineers. The success of the mutineers was complete, and they became undisputed masters of the city of Delhi under the nominal authority of the titular Emperor, Bahadur Shah. The strongly fortified walls of the city offered a protection and security which they badly needed at the initial stage before the country as a whole caught the mutinous spirit, and the prestige of the Imperial House of the Timurids served as a symbol for rallying heterogeneous elements round a common banner.

So well was all this understood by the British, that they regarded the recapture of Delhi as the most immediate and important objective of their military campaigns. Thus the eyes of friends and foes alike were turned towards the Imperial city, and every reasonable man, not blinded by prejudices and passion engendered by ambi-

tion or self-interest, could easily perceive that the future of the entire movement depended upon the fate of Delhi.

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1. Private cooking place of a sepoy.
2. A menial.
3. General Hearsey's letter, dated February 11, 1857, quoted in *AS*, 117.
4. *The Mutiny of the Bengal Army* (known as Red Pamphlet) (London, 1857).
5. Evidence for this has been given in Ch. XXI.
6. Malleson—II, 44.
7. The suggestion was made in the *Englishman*, a Calcutta Daily, on February 3, 1857. I am indebted to Dr. S B. Chaudhuri for this information.
8. These and other incidents, to which reference is made in this Chapter, are well-known episodes, mentioned in all standard books on the Mutiny. Hence they are not described in detail, and no reference to authorities is given.
9. N. I. stands for 'Native Infantry'. The figure is that of the Regiment.
10. The account is based on Kaye—I, Vol I, 501 ff. and Holmes, 83-4. Malleson takes a somewhat different view of Mitchell's conduct (Malleson—II. 40 ff).
11. Malleson—II. 42.
12. Forrest—I, I. 18-22. This account, based on the statement of Hearsey and evidence of eye-witnesses, slightly differs from that of Holmes (86-7).
13. Holmes, 89.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid, 90.
16. Ibid, 96
17. Malleson gives the date as 6th May (Malleson—II. 62), but this is evidently wrong.
18. Roberts—II. 49, f. n ; Kaye—I, Vol. I. 558 f. n. For this and other views supporting the objection of the sepoys to use greased cartridges, cf. Ch. XXI.
19. Kaye—I, Vol, II. 51-2.
20. Malleson—II. 64.
21. Forrest—I. 34.
22. Holmes says he was "convinced of this by the argument of Colonel G. W. Williams, who collected a vast amount of evidence on the subject". He also quotes the statement of a witness that "the said regiments did not plot anything beforehand. Had they done so, they would not have kept their wives and children with them as they did". "Other witnesses gave similar replies" (Holmes, p. 99). On the other hand, as will be related in Chapter XX, the probability of a mutiny at Mirat was known in Delhi before May 10. It appears that while a Mutiny was talked about at Mirat for some days, no definite arrangement was made, and no particular date was fixed, and the actual outbreak was due to a sudden impulse on May 10.
23. Holmes, 100.
24. This point will be further discussed in Chapter XX with reference to authorities.
25. For details see Chapter XVII, Section 2.

CHAPTER XVI

THE SPREAD OF THE MUTINY

1. *A General Outline*

The news of the mutiny of sepoys at Mirat, followed immediately by the capture of Delhi and the declaration of Bahadur Shah as the Emperor of Hindusthan, created a great sensation all over India. Its immediate reactions could be found in an abortive rising of the sepoys at Firozpur on May 13, and the outbreak of violent disturbances at Muzaffarnagar, followed by the mutiny of sepoys, on the 14th. These two minor incidents apart, the sepoys, the civil population, as well as the goonda elements, although highly excited by "the most exaggerated reports of the total collapse of British rule", remained in animated suspense for a week. Evidently, they regarded it as a mere accident or a passing phase, and expected at any moment to hear of the restoration of British authority. But as days passed, and every one of them brought evidence of lethargy and inactivity on the part of the British and stories of their disgrace and discomfiture in Delhi, the signs of reaction began to show themselves. A series of mutinies of sepoys, followed in many cases by the revolt of civil population, convulsed nearly the whole of Northern India. The first to rise was a detachment of sepoys at Aligarh on May 20, 1857. At first they remained not only unmoved, but quite loyal, and even delivered to the authorities a Brahman who had plotted to murder British officers. But when the conspirator was hanged in their presence, a sepoy pointed to the quivering body, and exclaimed to his comrades, "Behold! a martyr to our religion". The effect was almost instantaneous. The sepoys rose in a body, drove away their officers, and left for Delhi. This was followed by mutinies in the Panjāb, at Naushera, on May 21, and Hoti Mardan during the next two or three days; but these were easily put down. Far more serious, however, were the series of mutinies in Avadh and North-Western Provinces,—at Etawa and Mainpuri (May 23), Rurki (May 25), Etah (May 27), Hodal, Mathura, and Lakhnau (May 30), Bareilly and Shahjahanpur (May 31), Moradabad and Budaon (June 1), Azamgarh and Sitapur (June 3), Malaon, Mohamdi, Varanasi (Banaras) and Kanpur (Cawnpore) (June 4), Jhansi and Allahabad (June 6), Fyzabad (June 7), Dariabad and Fatepur (June 9), Fategarh (June 18), Hathras (July 1), and several other localities.

In general these mutinies followed the pattern set by Mirat. The sepoys killed the officers and other Europeans on whom they

could lay their hands, in many cases sparing neither women nor children. They also released the prisoners from jail, plundered the treasury, burnt Government offices, and then either set out for Delhi, or joined some local chiefs, or roamed at large, seeking to enrich themselves by indiscriminate plunder of both Indians and Europeans. There were, of course, exceptions to their general cruelty towards their late masters. In some cases the British officers were allowed to depart without any harm befalling them, and there are even instances where the sepoys watched over their safety during their flight. Thus, though many British officers and the members of their family were killed, many also succeeded in escaping to places of safety. Except in rare instances, as at Lakhnau (Lucknow) and Kanpur, the Europeans, or rather those among them that escaped or survived the massacre, quitted their stations.

The mutinies in Delhi and some other regions, notably Avadh, Rohilkhand and West Bihar, soon merged themselves into revolts of civil population against the British authority under local leaders. These will be described in the next chapter. A brief account of the principal centres of mutiny in other parts of India is given below.

2. *Kanpur (Cawnpore)*

The mutiny at Kanpur has achieved a notoriety beyond all proportions because of the part played by, or supposed to be played by, Dhondu Pant, *alias* Nana Saheb, the adopted son of Baji Rao II, the last Peshwa. Reference has been made above[1] to his unsuccessful attempt to inherit the pension enjoyed by his father, the ex-Peshwa. It is not unnatural that he would harbour resentment against the English. But Nana certainly gave no outward sign of his disaffection, or even of want of affection, towards the British, until destiny threw him into the vortex of the mighty upheaval in 1857. In spite of the rejection of his appeal by the Court of Directors, which set at rest his hope of securing the pension granted to his father, Nana continued his cordial relations with the British officials throughout the six years that followed, and ingratiated himself with the local British community by many acts of kindness and hospitality.[2]

Nana had inspired so much confidence in the British officials, both civil and military, that when the mutiny broke out at Mirat, and apprehensions were felt about the fidelity of the local sepoys, the Magistrate, Mr. Hillersdon, expected to suppress the mutiny, if it occurred, with the help of Nana. After consultation with Sir Hugh Wheeler, the Commander of the local forces, Hillersdon asked for the aid of Nana to guard the treasury, which was situated five miles away and contained more than a hundred thousand Pounds in cash. Nana

complied with the request and sent a body of his retainers with two guns. According to Shepherd, a contemporary writer, 'Nana Saheb offered his services; his offer was accepted and he came with 500 armed men and two guns'.[3] Mowbray Thomson, one of the four survivors of the Kanpur tragedy, however, categorically states that 'Nana did not volunteer his services, but Mr. Hillersdon, after consultation with Sir Hugh Wheeler, sent over to Bithoor requesting the presence and aid of Nana Saheb; he came instantly attended by his body-guard and engaged to send a force of two hundred cavalry, four hundred infantry, and two guns to protect the revenue.'[4] The retainers, whose number is variously estimated from two hundred to six hundred, posted themselves at Nawabganj which commanded both the treasury and the magazine. According to Tantia Topi's statement, he "went with Nana and about one hundred sepoys and three hundred matchlockmen and two guns to the Collector's house at Kanpur. The Collector... said it was fortunate we had come to his aid, as the sepoys had become disobedient, and that he would apply to the General in our behalf. He did so, and the General wrote to Agra, whence a reply came that arrangements would be made for the pay of our men".[5] This took place on May 22, i.e. twelve days after the mutiny at Mirat, and on the 23rd the British women and children and non-combatants took shelter within an improvised entrenchment. On the whole the view that Nana's aid was sought for by the British seems to be more probable.

All this definitely proves that the British residents at Kanpur did not entertain the least suspicion about Nana's fidelity to the British cause. This has been clearly expressed, in connection with this incident, by Mowbray Thomson as follows: "The relations we had always sustained with this man had been of so friendly a nature that not a suspicion of his fidelity entered the minds of any of our leaders; his reinforcements considerably allayed the feverish excitement caused by our critical condition, and it was even proposed that the ladies should be removed to his residence at Bithoor, that they might be in a place of safety."[6]

Late at night on June 4,[7] the 2nd Cavalry, and an hour or two later, the 1st Native Infantry mutinied, but did not attack their officers. The 56th N. I. joined the mutiny on the morning of the 5th, but the 53rd N.I. remained loyal. They resisted the pressure of the other sepoys to join them, and were peacefully engaged in their daily avocations, when "Ashe's battery opened upon them by Sir Hugh Wheeler's command and they were literally driven from us by nine-pounders".[8] A detachment of this regiment, posted at the treasury, fought for four hours against the rebel sepoys. The loyal remnant

of this regiment, 'though prepared to stand by their officers till the last, were not admitted into the entrenchment and were ultimately dismissed with a few rupees each and a certificate of fidelity'.[9] This is not the only instance where the panic of the British, not altogether unjustified, led to suspicion, and suspicion led to mutiny or desertion of troops who would probably have otherwise remained faithful.

The mutinous sepoys, as could be easily anticipated, made straight for the treasury at Nawabganj, and Nana's retainers probably fraternised with them. As noted above, the faithful sepoys of the 53rd N.I. held their ground for four hours, but as no relief came, were overpowered and fled. The mutineers rifled the treasury, released the prisoners in jail, and took possession of the magazine. Then they marched towards Delhi and reached Kalyanpur, the first stage of the road.

So far the general course of the mutiny at Kanpur is known with certainty. But the dramatic events that took place on the 5th June at Kalyanpur are shrouded in mystery. Nana is the chief actor in the whole drama, and its different versions reflect the different attitudes entertained towards that hero. There is no dispute about the last act of the drama, namely, that the mutinous sepoys, instead of proceeding to Delhi, returned to Kanpur, on June 6, under the leadership of Nana. But there are differences of opinion on the two vital questions: (1) When and why did Nana join the mutinous troops? and (2) What induced them to return to Kanpur after they had proceeded one march on the road to Delhi?

First, there is the view that Nana had been in secret league with the sepoys long before the Mutiny and offered his help to the British only to betray them later and destroy them all the more easily. As noted above, the highest British officials at Kanpur had no such suspicion at the time, and as will be shown later, the idea was discredited by some British officials even after the Mutiny was over. This view is not supported by any authentic and positive testimony, and rests mainly upon the diary of Nanak Chand and evidence of witnesses who were not improbably in league with him and simply corroborated whatever he recorded. It should be remembered that the evidences were rcorded shortly after the recapture of Kanpur by the British when everybody would come forward to save his skin or earn a reward by denouncing the conduct of Nana.

G. W. Forrest, who had to deal with these depositions in his famous collection of official records on the Mutiny, rightly observes: 'There are, it is true, the depositions of sixtythree witnesses, natives and half-castes, taken under the directions of Colonel Williams, Commissioner of Police in the North-Western Provinces, but they

are the depositions of men who had, or thought they had, the rope round their neck. Their evidence is full of discrepancies, and must be treated with extreme caution."[10]

As to Nanak Chand, he was himself a base informer and a sworn enemy of Nana for a long time before the outbreak of the Mutiny. It has been proved beyond doubt that his so-called "diary", on which some modern historians have relied, was not a day-to-day record of events, but really an account, put in the present shape, long after the events entered under different dates had occurred.[11]

As regards the character of the man it would be sufficient to state that when his application for a reward was referred to G. E. Lance, Collector of Kanpur, the latter wrote as follows on May 15, 1862: "Nanak Chand was a common informer and had disgusted everyone that has had anything to do with him...I know that the officer (G. W. Sherer, Collector of Kanpur) latterly never admitted him inside his compound. His so-called diary is generally supposed to have brought him in a handsome sum of money as it depended upon what he received whether a person's name was entered as a rebel or well-wisher."[12] Such is the man, on whom Sir George Trevelyan and T. Rice Holmes implicitly relied in giving an account of Nana and the mutiny of sepoys at Kanpur. Sober history cannot, however, place much reliance on what Nanak Chand says, and must dismiss, as quite unproved, the allegation that Nana was in league with the sepoys at Kanpur long before they broke out into mutiny.

Both Shepherd, writing in 1857, and Mowbray Thomson writing in 1859, seem to imply that Nana first joined the mutineers when they reached Nawabganj, where the treasury was situated, and to which place they proceeded directly from the cantonment. It is not a little curious that though both of them wrote from memory their own personal impressions, the incident is described by them in almost identical words. Thomson writes: "When they reached Nawabgunge the Nana came out to meet them and at their head proceeded to the treasury, where he had all the government elephants laden with public money".[13] Shepherd says: "It is reported that when the mutineers reached Nawabgunge, the Nana came out to receive them, and taking them with him proceeded to the treasury, where he had all the Government elephants well laden with the public money".[14] None of them could have any personal knowledge of the incident, and both relied on hearsay reports, as Shepherd plainly admits But it seems from the very close agreement, noted above, that both of them probably drew upon an identical written report. There is, however, one significant difference between the two Both say that Nana distributed a portion of the

loot among the mutinous sepoys, but whereas Thomson adds that 'Nana forthwith assumed their command', Shepherd is silent about it, and adds a different account in his book, published long after, as will be shown later.

Not much reliance can therefore be placed on the hearsay evidence of Mowbray Thomson and Shepherd. At the same time it has to be admitted that the reasons which induced Nana to join the mutineers cannot be determined with absolute certainty. We have no evidence of any person, who may be reasonably credited with a knowledge of the truth, save and except Tantia Topi, whose statement on this point runs as follows: "The three regiments of infantry and the Second Light Cavalry surrounded us, and imprisoned the Nana and myself in the Treasury and plundered the Magazine and the Treasury of everything they contained, leaving nothing in either. Of the treasure, the sepoys made over two lacs and eleven thousand rupees to the Nana, keeping their own sentries over it. The Nana was also under charge of these sentries, and the sepoys who were with us joined the rebels. After this the whole army marched from that place, and the rebels took the Nana Sahib and myself and all our attendants along with them, and said, 'Come along to Delhi'. Having gone three coss from Cawnpore, the Nana said that as the day was far spent, it was far better to halt there then, and to march on the following day. They agreed to this, and halted. In the morning the whole army told him (Nana) to go with them towards Delhi. The Nana refused, and the army then said, 'Come with us to Cawnpore and fight there'. The Nana objected to this, but they would not attend to him. And so, taking him with them as a prisoner, they went towards Cawnpore, and fighting commenced there."[15] The subsequent portion of this account suggests that the position of Nana *vis à vis* the sepoys was not unlike that of Bahadur Shah, and though he was the nominal leader of the sepoys, they did not obey his orders.

As Tantia was a devoted follower of Nana, and himself a rebel against the British, his statement cannot, of course, be taken as unvarnished truth. At the same time it is to be remembered that the statement was a sort of dying declaration, made by Tantia at a time when he had nothing to hope or fear from the British. He and Nana had committed acts which could never be forgiven or forgotten, and he was in the hands of those whose recent conduct proved beyond doubt that they never forgave nor forgot. So he could not possibly have any motive for hiding his own or Nana's guilt; on the other hand, there was every temptation to create the impression that they fought a patriotic or national war against the hated English which would enshrine their memory in the hearts of their countrymen. So,

if Nana had taken the lead in the mutiny of sepoys, one would normally expect Tantia to have emphasized, rather than denied, the fact.

It is interesting to note that Tantia's version is supported by Nana's own statement in a petition, dated 20 April, 1859, addressed to Her Majesty the Queen etc. He says that he "joined the rebels from helplessness" and elucidates it as follows:—

"My soldiers were not of my own country, and I previously urged that so insignificant (*gureeb*) a person as myself could render no material aid to the British. But General Wheeler would not listen to me and invited me into the entrenchments. When your army mutinied and proceeded to take possession of the Treasury my soldiers joined them. Upon this I reflected that if I went into the Entrenchments my soldiers would kill my family, and that the British would punish me for the rebellion of my soldiers. It was therefore better for me to die. My ryots were urgent and I was obliged to join the soldiers".[16]

Here, again, one should not ordinarily put much faith in the statement of Nana made in a petition for mercy. There are, however, two considerations which might possibly lead one to think otherwise. In the first place, it agrees with the statement of Tantia Topi, quoted above, made only a few days earlier at a very distant place, after the two had been separated for a pretty long time. Secondly, in course of the correspondence that followed the petition referred to above, Nana repeatedly declared that he would fight till the last and did not fear to die as "life must be given up some day". This makes it highly improbable that he would deny his active participation in the mutiny, if it were true, merely out of fear. Besides, he must have known very well that the British were sure of unearthing evidence in favour of it, if it were a fact, after his surrender.

A somewhat dramatic account of the conversion of Nana is given by Holmes in his narration of the events that took place just before the mutiny broke out. "The mutineers had sent a deputation of their officers to sound the intentions of Nana. Introduced into his presence, the spokesman addressed him in these words: "Maharajah, a kingdom awaits you if you join our enterprise, but death if you side with our enemies". "What have I to do with the British?" replied the Nana, "I am altogether yours". The officers went on to ask him whether he would lead them to Delhi. He assented, and then, laying his hands upon the head of each, swore that he would observe his promise. The delegates returned to their comrades; and next morning the four regiments marched as far as Kullianpore, on the road to Delhi".[17]

Holmes presumably based this account on Shepherd's later narrative. Dr. Sen, who refers to this incident more briefly, also cites Shepherd as his authority.[18] As Shepherd was in Kanpur at the time, his narrative has carried weight with many. But there are certain circumstances which detract its value. In the first place, as noted above, the incident is not mentioned in Shepherd's account, dated August 29, 1857,[19] i.e. almost immediately after the suppression of the mutiny at Kanpur. It is to be found only in his book published (first in 1862 and again) in 1878 and 1886.[20] Secondly, the whole paragraph containing the incident is put within inverted commas, showing that Shepherd quoted it from some other source whose identity he does not disclose. Thirdly, it is full of contradictions.[21] It begins by saying that Nana, immediately after his arrival at Kanpur from Bithur, "began to tamper with the troops and succeeded in effectually corrupting the fidelity of the 2nd Cavalry and the 1st N. I.". As this is hardly consistent with the story of the deputation of the sepoys, it has been added that the Deputation was 'prompted', in other words 'stage managed', by Nana's brother and others, though the necessity of any such mock show in that critical moment is not quite evident. Nevertheless, after narrating the incident of the deputation, the writer of the para adds: "Thus it is evident that up to this time there was no understanding come to in regard to attacking General Wheeler, or where would have been the necessity for marching away from the station". The quotation ends here and Shepherd adds that "it was the golundazes of the Oudh battery who represented to Nana" the advantages likely to be derived from attacking the English in their entrenchments at Kanpur. Shepherd then resumes the quotation as follows: "A consultation was then held between the Nana and his advisers, in which Bala Rao and Azimulla took the lead. The folly of going to Delhi, where everyone of them was likely to lose his individual influence and power was discussed, and it was unanimously agreed that Nana was the proper person to assume the sovereignty in these provinces...". Shepherd then adds: "Accordingly the Nana proceeded to Kullianpore and told the mutineers he would double the amount of pay they received from the British Government if they would agree to stay and fight....".[22] This also hardly fits in with the story of the Deputation which had already promised a kingdom to Nana.

Now, neither the story of Nana's tampering with the troops before the Mutiny nor that of the Deputation was known to Mowbray Thomson in 1859. As they do not occur in the first account of Shepherd, it is obvious that he himself neither knew nor heard of these incidents up to the end of August, 1857, but later got them

from a secondary source, a written account, from which he quoted some passages. There is little doubt that the episode of the Deputation originated from the deposition of Kunhye Pershad (Kanai Prasad), a mahajan (trader) of Kanpur, recorded by Lieutenant-Colonel Williams before the end of March, 1859.

After referring to a secret meeting of Nana with some sepoys Kanai Prasad said: "Two or three days after this the sepoys mutinied. I also heard that some of the Native officers and troopers waited on the Nana with intimation that a kingdom was prepared for him, if he joined them with all his wealth, or death if he sided with the Europeans. The Nana replied that he was with them and had nothing to do with Europeans; he was then requested to lead the troops to Delhi, to which he assented...". Then the witness narrated how Nana assumed the leadership after taking an oath to that effect, was persuaded by Azimulla to give up the idea of going to Delhi, and "with Bala and Azimulla went to Kallianpur and got the troops to return to Kanpur" When asked about his source of information, the witness said he got all this information from Ramdeen, an attendant of Nana Saheb, by paying him Rs. 20, Rs. 10 each time for the information, which he collected because he feared for his life. But when asked 'what he had to fear from Nana', he merely said that he was afraid of a Risaldar of Nana, named Jwala Prasad, who bore a grudge against him and confiscated his property after the Mutiny.[23]

The nature of the information supplied by this witness about Nana's intrigue with the sepoys before their mutiny may be judged from the fact that Sheo Charan, who also deposed to it, does not refer to any of the sepoys who, according to Kanai Prasad, met Nana at a ghat on the Ganges. According to Sheo Charan, Tika Singh met Nana three or four days before the mutiny and told him: "We all. Hindus and Mahomedans, have united for our religions, and the whole Bengal army have become one in purpose—What do you say to it? The Nana replied, "I also am at the disposal of the army".[24]

The story recorded by Shepherd has been accepted, sometimes with unimportant variations, by many writers. But it cannot be regarded as an authentic story, as it was evidently based on gossips and hearsays, a good many of which, differing radically from one another, were given in deposition before Lt. Colonel Williams. Shepherd's version cannot therefore be given preference to the narrative of Tantia Topi.

Even many contemporary authorities refused to accept Shepherd's story as authentic and pointed out its inconsistency. Thus Sherer, the Magistrate of Kanpur, observes: "Nana was not clearly in league, previously, with the native soldiery, or it would not have

been necessary for him to pursue them down the road, and entreat them, with lavish promises, to return". Thornhill. Officiating Commissioner, Allahabad Division, also endorsed the views of Sherer. He remarks: "Had any understanding existed between the Nana and the troops, there would have been no object in the march they made on the Delhi road. It was not until they had gone that the Nana seems to have finally determined on embarking on an enterprise in which he staked his life on the chance of gaining a throne as the founder of a new Maharatta dynasty". Sherer and Thornhill recorded their views, respectively, in January and April, 1859.[25]

It may be observed that barring the brief statement of Nana and Tantia Topi's more elaborate one, there is no other account which may reasonably be regarded as emanating from a person who was in a position to know the truth regarding Nana's relations with the mutinous troops at Kanpur until he assumed their leadership on 6 June, 1857. Whether Nana or Tantia Topi told the whole truth may justly be doubted, but no one else, whose account has reached us, had any opportunity to know the truth. The historian is therefore forced to the conclusion that nothing can be definitely said beyond the fact that on June 5 Nana joined the mutinous troops who returned from Kalyanpur. Whether he yielded to threat or temptation, or was induced by both to place himself at the head of the mutinous troops, will, perhaps, never be known. It is not even certain whether he accompanied the troops to Kalyanpur and, if not, whether he went there in person to induce them to return, or left that task to his agents.

Sir Hugh Wheeler must have heaved a sigh of relief when he heard that the mutineers had proceeded towards Delhi, as he fully expected. But early in the morning of the sixth he received a letter from Nana himself warning him to expect an attack.[26] Signs of the returning sepoys were visible from afar. For the sepoys were, as usual, busy plundering the citizens, burning their houses, and killing stray Europeans. After all this was finished, the sepoys turned their attention to the entrenchment where the British soldiers and civil population had taken shelter.

Even before the sepoys actually broke out into mutiny, General Hugh Wheeler had hastily constructed a place of refuge for the British community. It consisted of two one-storied barracks, made of brick, but one of them had only a thatched roof. These were surrounded by a shallow trench and a mud wall about four feet in height. This entrenchment constituted a defence of a very frail character, but nevertheless its construction and the removal of women and children into it on 21 May were irritating to the sepoys who could see in it a

clear evidence that their officers had no confidence in their loyalty. Into this miserable defence were now huddled up 900 souls, comprising about four hundred English fighting men, of whom more than seventy were invalids, and about 376 women and children; the rest were Indians including 20 sepoys, 44 regimental musicians and 50 servants. They had to defend themselves against three thousand armed sepoys well armed and supplied with all munitions of war.[27]

But in spite of the disparity of numbers and the weakness of the defence, the defenders held out till June 25. Nothing is stranger in the whole history of the outbreak of 1857 than the ignominious failure of Kunwar Singh to take Boyle's house at Arrah and of Nana to overcome the flimsy defence at Kanpur, and these must ever redound to the eternal discredit of these two redoubtable heroes of the Mutiny.

The military operations at Kanpur may be briefly told. At first the sepoys merely bombarded the entrenchment, and day and night hurled a continuous shower of shot and shell, and bullets. Once, on June 12, they made an assault, but turned back after a few sepoys had been killed by the fire of the enemy. On June 23, they made another assault, but were "hurled back as before, in ignominious rout". On June 25, "a woman came into the entrenchment, with a letter from the Nana, offering a safe passage to Allahabad to every member of the garrison who had not been 'connected with the acts of Lord Dalhousie'. The offer was accepted and a regular treaty was signed on the 26th". It was provided that the entrenchment should be evacuated and boats with food supply would be provided by Nana for taking the besieged to Allahabad.[28] In pursuance of this agreement, on the morning of June 27, the besieged Englishmen got into forty boats kept ready for them at the *Sati Chaura ghat.* As soon as the last man had stepped into the boat, a bugle was heard and all the native boatmen jumped over and waded to the shore. Some Englishmen *immediately* fired upon them. Then the very sepoys who escorted the last batch of Englishmen to the *ghat* opened fire with their carbines. The fire was returned by the Englishmen and the sepoys retired. Shortly the troops and guns posted by the riverside came into action. One boat caught fire and the conflagration spread to the neighbouring boats, all of which had thatched roofs. Many, particularly the sick and the wounded, were burnt to death, while the rest, including some women with children in their arms, took to the river. Many of these were killed, and a number of them were made captives. A single boat escaped, but it was later seized, and only four of its occupants fled with their lives to tell the tale of this ghastly affair.[29] It was a terrible tragedy, and it has been suggested that

the whole thing was the result of a pre-arranged conspiracy. There is no satisfactory evidence in support of this charge save the fact that the soldiery had gone out to the riverside in force,—horse, foot and artillery. But this, by itself, cannot be regarded as conclusive evidence of a pre-concerted conspiracy. On the other hand, it would appear from the testimony of one of the survivors, Mowbray Thomson, that it was the English who fired the first shot as the boatmen left the boats. Whether this provoked the sepoys to commit this cruel and inhuman massacre, which they undoubtedly did, cannot be determined now. But they had enough provocations already to urge them to the nefarious deed. News must have reached Kanpur of the equally inhuman cruelties, on a much larger scale, perpetrated by Neill in those very localities in U.P. to which the sepoys belonged. In Kanpur itself, the hands of the mutineers were guiltless of their officers' blood, whereas "every prisoner taken by the English was despatched without any formality". It is not unlikely, therefore, that the tragedy at *Sati Chaura ghat* was deliberately planned; but if so, no one knows by whom. It was said by some eye-witnesses that the murder was commenced at a signal given by Tantia Topi. Tantia, in his own statement, says: "I went and got ready forty boats, and having caused all the gentlemen, ladies, and children to get into the boats, I started them off to Allahabad.... The sepoys jumped into the water and commenced a massacre of all the men, women, and children, and set the boats on fire."[30] The signal, which Tantia Topi was seen to give, may be construed, according to his statement, as a signal to start the boats. On the other hand, several witnesses definitely stated that they heard Tantia to give orders for the massacre.[31] But not much reliance should be placed upon these witnesses who were out to save their own necks or earn a reward. Such evidence would hardly be accepted by a criminal court as sufficient for conviction, but the Englishmen in those days were credulous enough to regard every sensational story as true, irrespective of the status of the informer, and howsoever incredible it might appear in normal times.

Nana was not present on the riverside. Though, as the leader of the sepoys, he must bear full responsibility for their action, there is nothing to indicate that he had deliberately plotted to murder the Englishmen. The whole tenor of his conduct goes against such an assumption. But whatever we might think of Nana's active participation in the massacre, and the measure of guilt justly attaching to him, his subsequent conduct cannot but be regarded as highly reprehensible. On the very day of the massacre a salute in honour of this event was fired, and Nana issued instructions to celebrate the

victory over the "white faces" with rejoicings and peals of artillery.

Henceforth Nana assumed the role of a conquering hero. On June 30, he was proclaimed Peshwa amid the usual pomp and ceremonies of olden times. He spent his time in his palace at Bithur with feasts and revels, and issued grandiloquent proclamations "from Painted Garden of the Peshwa". These contained despicable lies and vainglorious boasts which are no less amusing than contemptible. He also issued royal orders to sundry chiefs and officers and regaled them with tales of victory. They were ordered to proclaim by beat of drums in all cities and villages the glad tidings that "all the English at *Poona and in Punna* have been slain and sent to hell, and five thousand English who were at Delhi have been put to the sword by the royal troops".[32]

3. *Jhansi*

The mutiny rapidly spread to the south of the Yamunā river. The first to be affected were the sepoys at Jhansi. There were two forts at Jhansi, a small one in the Cantonment, and another outside it. On June 5, 1857, some sepoys peacefully took possession of the small fort under some pretext. On June 6, there was a mutiny of the whole force according to a pre-concerted plan, in which some persons, outside the army, also seem to have taken part. Some officers were killed or injured, and the rest of the Europeans took shelter in the other fort, also outside the town. On June 8, the mutineers promised personal security to all the Europeans provided they left the fort without taking any arms. But as soon as they came out of the fort, all of them—men, women, and children—were taken to a garden and massacred in cold blood. According to one account, 57 men, 12 women, and 23 children perished in this way, but another account sets the total number as 72. The mutineers proceeded to Delhi three days after this nefarious deed.

There is nothing to indicate that any leading part in this mutiny was taken by Rani Lakshmibai of Jhansi, the widowed queen of Gangadhar Rao, the last ruler of Jhansi, who has been mentioned above as a victim of Dalhousie's Doctrine of Lapse.[33] The Rani would have been more or less than a human being if she had not cherished strong sentiment against the British Government for setting aside the adoption made by her husband and annexing Jhansi. This very natural presumption of Rani's feeling of antipathy towards the British has induced many persons to believe that the Rani had instigated the sepoys to mutiny, or at least actively helped the mutineers, by way of taking revenge against the British. There is

nothing to support this view. On the other hand, the Rani was no friend of the sepoys. She was forced by the mutineers to help them with money, guns and elephants. The Rani herself says that she was threatened by the sepoys that if she at all hesitated to comply with their requests, they would blow up her palace with guns; and she was, therefore, "obliged to consent to all their demands to pay large sums to save life and honour."

The Rani's statement that she acted under duress is also proved by independent evidence, including early official reports about the mutiny at Jhansi. It is further supported by Rani's conduct and attitude after that mutiny. Immediately after the mutinous sepoys had left Jhansi for Delhi, she put herself in communication with the British authorities, sending a full report of the mutiny and condemning the conduct of the sepoys, particularly the massacre of the Europeans. The Commissioner of the Saugor Division, to whom she wrote as Jhansi lay in his jurisdiction, believed in her innocence and pro-British attitude. As all the British officials at Jhansi were killed, and the whole region became a scene of rapine and plunder, he appointed the Rani to rule the territory on behalf of the British till such time as they could re-establish a regular system of administration, and he issued a formal proclamation to that effect. The Rani accepted the position and carried on the administration of Jhansi in the name, or on behalf, of the British Government.

The Government of India, however, suspected her from the very beginning as an accomplice of the mutinous sepoys, both in respect of the mutiny and the massacre that followed. They accordingly issued instructions to collect evidence of her guilt. The Rani made repeated attempts to disabuse their minds, but failed. No heed was paid either to her protestations of innocence or to her unequivocal declaration of loyalty to the British. When she was at last convinced that the British were determined to bring her to trial for the massacre of the Europeans—but not till then—she decided to defend her honour by armed resistance to the British. She was faced by two alternatives, namely death by a hangman's rope or a heroic death in the battlefield. She chose the more honourable course, with what consequence, it will be related later.[34]

4. *The Panjāb*

There were no serious troubles in the Panjāb, for as soon as the news of Mirat and Delhi reached Lahore, the authorities decided to disarm the sepoys. In most places the disarming took place smoothly. In Lahore 2500 sepoys, confronted by 600 European troops, laid down their arms without any protest. At Firozpur, one of the sepoy

regiments quietly gave up arms, but two hundred sepoys of the other mutinied. The rest left the station but were pursued. Some went to Patiala and were imprisoned there by its Sikh ruler; others were arrested by the villagers and taken to the authorities; and the remnant reached Delhi.

Preparations were made to disarm the regiments of sepoys at Jullundur, but in spite of the help rendered by the Raja of Kapurthala, the authorities had to change the date of arrangement twice for want of adequate European troops. The sepoys having got an inkling of this rose in arms and marched to Ludhiana. The Deputy Commissioner, helped by the Raja of Nābhā and with a small number of troops, failed to arrest their progress On reaching Ludhiana the mutineers, "aided by the native garrison and the populace, attacked the houses of Government officials, released the prisoners, plundered the native traders, and finally marched to Delhi." Ludhiana was an important strategic point commanding the Grand Trunk Road. But the sepoys made no attempt to occupy it. It is said that in their hurry to leave Jullundur they had taken blank instead of balled ammunition. But even the very brief presence of the sepoys at Ludhiana had the usual consequence. "Arson, murder, highway robbery, cattle-lifting and dacoity suddenly revived; and some of the offenders, when apprehended, naively accounted for their misconduct by confessing that they had believed the rule of the British to be over". A punitive fine was imposed on the city and its population were disarmed.[35]

The sepoys at Kangra laid down their arms without any protest. The more difficult task of disarming two thousand sepoys at Multan with the help of 60 Europeans and loyal Indian troops was also smoothly accomplished. At Peshawar three thousand sepoys and five hundred sowars were disarmed without any difficulty, but a Company ran away under cover of night. They were hunted by the tribesmen, for prices were set on their heads, and many of them were blown away from the guns. An interesting episode occurred at Hoti Mardan. The British officers of the 55th N.I., stationed there, regarded the sepoys as thoroughly reliable, and were opposed to the idea of disarming them. When troops were sent from Peshawar for that purpose, the Commanding Officer, by way of protest, committed suicide. The 55th fled, but were remorselessly pursued. More than a hundred were killed, three to four hundred wounded, and about 120 were captured. The rest entered Swat. "Proclaiming themselves religious martyrs, they persuaded the king to take them into his service; and for a moment there seemed a danger that they might return with renewed strength to menace the Punjab. The virtual

ruler of Swat was an aged priest, known as the Akhund. Had he espoused their cause, and, taking them with him, swept down upon the Peshawar valley, and preached a holy war against the infidels, he might have kindled the smouldering religious zeal of the population into such a flame as would have, perhaps, consumed the fabric of British power. Fortunately, instead of doing this, he expelled them from the country, only granting them guides to conduct them across the Indus. Then, in their misery, they resolved to throw themselves upon the mercy of the Maharaja of Kashmir". But at the instigation of the Deputy Commissioner, the Zamindars and clansmen occupied all the passes and the mutineers were forced to enter Kohistan where, in course of traversing the almost trackless rugged hills, many were drowned, and many stoned or slain in battle by the mountaineers whom the Deputy Commissioner hounded on against them. The remnants surrendered, and most of them were either hanged or blown away from guns.[36]

Movable columns disarmed the sepoys at several cantonments, and there was no resistance except in a few places. At Jhelum the sepoys resisted, but were either killed or captured. The Raja of Kashmir arrested those who fled to Kashmir and handed them over to the British. Stray fugitives were captured by the villagers. The sepoys at Sialkot also mutinied, killed a few, and then left for Hoshiarpur. They were, however, pursued and destroyed. With a few minor exceptions, noted above, the sepoys surrendered their arms without any protest; some were even obliging enough to carry their arms to the bungalow of the commander.

Thus the mutiny in the Panjāb had some distinctive features. In the few cases where it occurred, it was, without exception, the result of attempt to disarm the sepoys. Secondly, the sepoys in the Panjāb nowhere succeeded in establishing their authority like their confreres in Avadh and Rohilkhand. Thirdly, very severe measures were taken against sepoys who were not disloyal or hostile, but whose only offence was to make an attempt to save themselves from the disgrace of being disarmed by flight.

But even some of the disarmed sepoys met with a tragic end. The disarmed 26th N.I. at Mian-Mir fled from the camp in a body on July 30, and being intercepted by two officers, killed them. How they were ultimately overtaken by Mr. Cooper, and he took a terrible, almost barbarous, vengeance on them, will be related in Chapter XIX.

With the exception of a small garrison in Khelat-i-Ghilzai, the sepoys throughout the Panjāb were disarmed, in spite of their past record, merely on suspicion. But the authorities in the Panjāb had

something more to their credit. They raised levies of turbulent frontier Pathans. "It was a master stroke of policy to enlist these turbulent people and remove them from their native districts where they might prove a constant source of worry and anxiety, and to take them far beyond the five rivers where their military instincts and greed for plunder would have the fullest play. The sepoys had gone to Lahore, Multan, Peshawar and Bannu as the instrument of the British imperial policy. The table was now turned on them, and the Panjābi Muslim and the Sikh, the tribesmen of Kohat and the Yusufzai country were united against the Hindustanis, Muslims and non-Muslims, by the common hatred they bore against them".[37]

5. *Other Parts of India*

The news of the mutiny at Jhansi led to that of the sepoys at Nowgong, who formed detachments of the Jhansi regiment, on June 10. On June 14, the sepoys in the Gwalior Contingent, recruited from Avadh, mutinied, and killed as many Europeans as they could, but allowed the women to go unharmed. For a long time this formidable body of well-equipped sepoys, though mutinous, had remained idle at Gwalior in the vain hope of being led by Sindhia against the British, though they might have played a dominant, if not decisive, part in the mutiny of Central India, Delhi, Agra or Kanpur. When they at last actually mutinied, it was too late for them to play any effective part.

At Indore the troops belonging to Holkar mutinied on July 1, and three hundred Bhils and two Companies of the Bhopal Cavalry, which formed part of the British garrison, were brought to oppose them. But ere long they cast in their lot with the mutineers. In the words of Ball, "by one impulse the whole of the troops that had assisted in the defence. . . .deserted to the mutineers, threatening at the same time to shoot the officers if they ventured to interfere with them." Some Europeans were murdered, treasury was looted, and public property destroyed. The mutiny at Indore was followed by that at Mhow. Mutiny also broke out in several places in the Sagar and Narmada territories towards the end of June.

At Dhar, the Arab and Afghan mercenaries in the service of the Raja rose against the British. A number of Sindhia's troops had seized Mandasor and were shortly joined by a part of the mutinous cavalry of the Gwalior Contingent and other insurgent hordes, including Afghan and Mekrani Muslims. The leader of this motley body was Shahzada Firuz Shah, a direct descendant of the Mughul Emperors of Delhi, who had already declared a *jihad* against the British. He seized the town of Mandasor and formally installed him-

self as king. He "addressed circular letters to the neighbouring princes of Pratabgarh, Jawra, Sitamau, Ratlam, and the Chief of Salumbar, calling upon them to acknowledge the new power, but none responded except Abdul Sattar Khan, a scion of the ruling house of Jawra." By September the number of his followers increased to about eighteen thousand, and he sent troops against Nimach in November. They defeated a contingent force at Jiran and laid siege to the fort, but had soon to face the British troops under Henry Marion Durand, the Agent of the Governor-General in Central India, who had already suppressed the mutiny at Dhar. Firuz Shah's troops were defeated at Garoria and he himself fled from Mandasor which was retaken by the British.[38] But his career did not end here and he occasionally emerged as a leader of the mutiny at far distant places, as will be described later.

Rājasthān, though generally unaffected, had its share, and the troops at the two important military stations, namely, Nasirabad and Nimach, mutinied respectively on May 28 and June 3. They followed the usual pattern and, after having plundered the cantonment and burnt many bungalows, proceeded towards Delhi. The people remained quiet, and the Rājput chiefs, particularly the Raja of Jodhpur, helped the British. The only exception was Thakur Kusal Singh, the Chief of Ahua or Awah, who had some specific grievances against the British. He joined the mutineers and defeated not only the troops of Jodhpur but also a British force under Captain Mason. But in spite of heroic resistance he ultimately surrendered.[39] There was also a mutiny at Kotah where the rebel troops took possession of the city and kept the Maharaja a prisoner. But after six months they were defeated by the British forces.

Bengal was practically unaffected by the Mutiny with the exception of two sporadic outbursts at Dacca and Chittagong. On November 18, the 34th N.I. at Chittagong mutinied and followed the usual procedure. They found no sympathy among the people and, being defeated by the loyal native regiment, marched northwards through Sylhet and Cāchār. Being defeated, they turned towards the east and were joined by some discontented chiefs of Manipur living in Cāchār. But they could not enter Manipur, whose ruler, at the request of the British, sent his troops and captured a number of them. These were handed over to the British and the rest betook themselves to the neighbouring hills and jungles. On November 22, the troops at Dacca refused to be disarmed and mutinied, but being defeated, fled towards Jalpaiguri. There were some desultory outbreaks in the Bhagalpur Division, and two cavalry detachments at Madariganj

and Jalpaiguri mutinied. But these as well as the mutineers from Dacca were easily dispersed and forced to seek refuge in Nepal.

In Bihar, the most important military station was Danapur (Dinapore), near Patna, which was an important strategic position commanding the land and river-routes from Calcutta to Upper India. The sepoys were loyal during the month of June and the better part of July. Nevertheless, suspicion grew and William Tayler, the Magistrate of Patna, urged upon the Government that the sepoys should be disarmed at once. The Government left the final decision to the Commanding Officer at Danapur who, after some hesitation, followed a *via media*. Without inflicting upon the sepoys the dishonour of laying down their arms, he decided merely to take away their percussion caps, and thereby render their fire-arms harmless. In the morning the European troops were drawn up and the caps were carted away from the magazine past the indignant sepoys. In the afternoon, when the European troops were busy eating their dinners, another parade was held and the sepoys were asked to surrender the contents of the cap cases which they carried on their persons "They answered the demand by firing on the officers". The Commanding Officer was away on a steamer in the river to prevent the sepoys from crossing the river, and the other officers hesitated to take any decisive action. So the mutineers repossessed themselves of the caps that had been taken from the magazine and marched towards the Son river. As the Son was swollen and difficult to cross, they could have been easily overtaken. But the folly of Mirat was repeated, and the sepoys were not pursued. They safely reached Arrah where Kunwar Singh, a Rājput Zamindar, joined them and converted the mutiny into a general revolt which will be described in the next chapter.

Mutiny also broke out in several other places in Bihar. In August some sepoys mutinied, came to Noada, destroyed the public buildings (September 8), and then marched towards Gaya. Rattray, with a small force of Sikhs and Europeans, advanced from Gaya to meet them, but the sepoys inflicted heavy loss upon this force and entered Gaya. There they liberated the prisoners and attacked the fortified house where the European residents had taken refuge, but failed to take it. The sepoys also mutinied at Deogarh, but were dispersed after a severe contest. The Ramgarh battalions mutinied at Hazaribagh, and their comrades at Sambalpur followed their example.

The mutinous spirit was not altogether lacking in the Deccan, but there was no actual outbreak of mutiny except at Kolhapur. There the sepoys mutinied on July 31, 1857, and after plundering the treasury marched towards the town. As the gates were closed,

most of them returned to their lines, while a few, about forty in number, entrenched themselves into a small outwork adjoining the town. Reinforcement of European troops having arrived from Bombay, the sepoys in the outwork were overpowered. On the arrival of further reinforcements. the native regiment was disarmed.

Attempts at mutiny failed at Ahmadabad in Gujarat and Hyderabad in Sindh. A mutiny actually broke out at Karachi, but was easily put down.

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1. See. p. 79.
2. Sen, 128, where other details of Nana's life are given.
3. Shepherd, 7.
4. Thomson, 32-3.
5. The full text of Tantia's statement is given in Malleson, III, 514 ff., in English translation. The statement was recorded in Mushairi on April 10, 1859, in the presence of Major Meade, Commanding Field Force. Asked by Meade Tantia said: "I have, of my own free will, caused this statement to be written; and no one has forced me to do so, or held out hope or compromise of any sort to induce me to do so.". Recently, the authenticity of the statement has been challenged on grounds which are merely a string of queries containing vague insinuations to which little value attaches so long as clear charges with evidence to support them are not forthcoming (*Freedom Struggle in Uttar Pradesh*, I. xvii).

   For a short summary of Tantia's statement, cf Majumdar, pp. 158-63, 89-90. Tantia's statement about the help rendered by Nana to Hillersdon, as quoted in the text, is fully supported by Nana himself in his petition which will be referred to later.
6. Thomson, 32-3.
7. This is the correct date. Mowbray Thomson says: "On the night of the 6th of June the 2nd cavalry broke out" (p. 38). This must be due to oversight or loss of memory.
8. Thomson, 39. For a discussion of the propriety of Wheeler's conduct, Cf. Sen, 137.
9. Sen, 136-7.
10. Forrest—I, Vol. I, 478-9.
11. For a detailed discussion of the question, cf. Sen, 162 ff.
12. Quoted in Sen, 163. Mowbray Thomson (pp. 247-8) relates how even highly placed Indian officials blackmailed wealthy persons by forging letters in order to implicate them in the mutiny.
13. Thomson, 41.
14. Forrest—II, Vol. II, 123.
15. Kaye—I, Vol. II, 310 f. n.; Malleson, III. 515.
16. Majumdar, p. xiii.
17. Holmes, 227-8.
18. Sen, 137-8.
19. Forrest—II, Vol. II, 120.
20. Shepherd (2nd edition, 1878), p. 29.
21. See p. 480.
22. Shepherd, 30.
23. The deposition of Kanai Prasad is quoted in Forrest—II, Vol. III, pp. cxxiii-iv.
24. Ibid, cxxvi.
25. Forrest—II, Vol. III, xxv, xix.
26. Holmes, 228. Kaye gives the date as 7 June (Vol. II, 313). The object of writing this letter is not apparent (cf. Sen, 138-9). To those who are not obsessed with the idea of Nana's treachery from the very beginning, the letter may justly appear to be the last friendly act of Nana towards the British, by way of previous warning of the changed role he would be henceforth forced to play, so far as his relation with the British was concerned.
27. Thomson, 30.
28. Holmes, 229-236.

29 This is based on the account of Mowbray Thomson, one of these four survivors.
30. Malleson, III, 515-6.
31. Kaye—I, Vol. II, 340-1, f. n.
32. Ibid, 670.
33. See pp. 65 ff.
34. The evidences on which this account is based are discussed fully in Majumdar, 137-55. For the documents referred to, cf. *BPP*, LXXVI, Part I, 46, 49 ff.
35. The account, including quotations, is based on Holmes, 330-32.
36. Ibid, 327-8.
37. Sen, 334.
38. Sen, 311, 318.
39. For a detailed account, cf. Sen, 319-20

CHAPTER XVII

THE REVOLT OF THE PEOPLE

I. THE IMMEDIATE CAUSE AND GENERAL NATURE OF THE REVOLT

The success of the mutineers at various places, and the massacre or flight of the local British officials, in particular their abandonment of the city of Delhi into the hands of the mutineers, led the people all over Rohilkhand and Awadh to believe that the British *raj* had ceased to exist. No visible symbol was left of its authority in many localities, and there was almost a complete political vacuum and lack of any kind of authority. In all ages and countries such a situation affords the best opportunity for popular outbreaks, varying in nature, according to the circumstances and temperament of the different types of people.

As already mentioned above,[1] all classes of people in India were thoroughly discontented and disaffected against the British. It is, therefore, quite natural, and no extraordinary phenomenon, that there should be a general rising of the people against the hated *feringhees* wherever the success of the mutiny had destroyed their power and authority. Hopes of personal gain also undoubtedly operated to a large extent among all classes, and were the sole motive of many, notably the *goonda* elements and those professional classes who were accustomed to live by plunder, such as the Gujars Ranghars, Jats etc.

Another class, which was powerfully influenced by motives of self-interest and contributed largely to the origin and prolongation of the popular revolt, was the one connected with the land. The following analysis of the causes of the popular outbreak in the District of Allahabad by the then local Magistrate has a much wider application.

"In the Doab Pergunnahs the character of the outbreak was worse, and the extent greater than anywhere else. The *Zemindars* there were chiefly Mussulmen, and with scarcely an exception, they joined their brethren, with the object of exterminating the English, and upsetting the Government. Pergunnah Chail was the worst of all; the Moulvie was a resident of Mahagaon, one of its villages, and every Mussulman there joined his standard. The Pragwal Brahmins of Allahabad, who were also foremost in the outbreak, carried with them the Hindu population. The District Police went almost in a body, and for a short time the greatest anarchy prevailed.

"In the trans-Gangetic *pergunnahs,* the causes which acted to excite the disturbances were different. Religion had little or nothing to do with it. The villages in these *pergunnahs* were owned at the cession by large *thakoor* families in large *talooka's.* The old *zemindars,* habitually extravagant, because, by habit, livers on plunder, became ruined by their extravagance, and were sold up by our rule and by our laws The cultivators and poorer classes still continued to look upon them with greater regard than the purchaser to auction, however long the latter may have been in possession of the property The ex-*zemindar* and his family were still the most influential residents of the village In most instances, they received a kind of tribute from the poorer inhabitants, and helped them in return....

"The auction purchaser, on the other hand, was generally a resident of the city, and never visited his village, except for the hateful purpose of collecting his rents, or enforcing his decrees The people, therefore, naturally sided with the *zemindars* to whom the outbreaks seemed a grand opportunity of recovering their position They first set to work to destroy and plunder everything European, and took forcible possession of their old estates. Of course, the auction purchasers were our friends, and rendered every assistance in their power for the restoration of order" "In the pergunnahs south of the Jumna bad characters burnt and plundered villages but disturbances never took fair root owing principally to the great influence of the Rajas of Manda, Dihya and Barra ..Such was the state of the district during the interval immediately succeeding the mutiny at Allahabad The Doab population, led on by their Mohamedan *zemindars,* had risen with enthusiasm to take part in a religious war, and had marked their rising with the usual accompaniments of Mahomedan fanaticism The rising had been quickly checked and a large proportion of the population had fled, leaving the district partially deserted The trans-Gangetic population, led on by the old *talookdar* families, had risen to restore the old order of things, and remained in arms against us. The trans-Gangetic population has, as before mentioned, been restrained by local influences, and never openly threw off our Government"[2]

Personal gain or satisfaction of personal ambition which impelled the people to rebel took many forms. The leaders and grandees thought of recovering the territories, honours and privileges they had lost, gaining new lands and wealth within easy reach, or paying off old scores against an enemy,—a natural instinct from which they were hitherto restrained by the rule of law established by the British Some were eager to seize this golden opportunity of making amends for the grievous injuries they had suffered in the hands of the British. Less important persons sought to remove the sources of their misery and humiliation by (i) destroying the bonds for loans or title-deeds of land deposited with the *baniyas* at the time of borrowing money at high rate of interest which threatened to ruin them; and (2) killing the oppressive landlords or indigo-planters who had hitherto treated them as serfs. They welcomed, if not initiated, the revolt, because it did away with the inconvenient necessity of paying taxes to the Government and rent to the landowners, ushered in freedom from all vexatious restraints imposed by authority, and above all, meant the end of the various sources of discontent which the British rule had introduced in the country.

In many cases the outbreak was merely a continuation or revival of the acts of resistance discussed in Chapter XIV, and many revolts were inspired by the same or similar causes.

It is possible that less selfish motives were also at work. The general discontent and disaffection against the British made some persons anxious to put an end to their rule, and they seized the god-sent opportunity to drive away the hated *feringhees,* now that they had lost the only prop of their rule in India, namely, the allegiance of the sepoys.

Some Muslim leaders and Maulavis were fired by the ambition of restoring Muslim rule in India. A few leaders, both Hindu and Muslim, might have been urged by the noble instinct of achieving freedom from foreign yoke, although their vision did not extend to the whole of India, and was limited to the narrow horizon of their own locality.

While these and other causes produced local revolts over an extensive area, it is significant to note that there was no common end, common plan, or common organization. In most cases the outbreaks were purely local affairs, and attempts to put in a joint resistance to the British were few and far between.

Another significant feature was that though the beginnings of the revolt were marked by timidity and hesitation, after the people had made their choice they often resisted the mighty British force with valour and heroism, sometimes to a remarkable degree. Once they had crossed the Rubicon, many rebels never looked back.

There are reasons to believe that an attempt was made to prepare the ground for popular revolt against the British by a number of persons, notably some Muslim Maulavis. The best known among them is Maulavi Ahmadulla of Fyzabad, originally a native of Arcot in Madras. Early in January, 1857, an incendiary address, written in Hindusthani, was placarded at Madras, calling upon all true believers to rise against the English infidels, and drive them from India. It declared that the English "had now abandoned all principles of justice and were bent on appropriating the possessions of the Mahomedans, and that there was but one way of resisting their encroachments—a holy war".[3] It is highly probable that this was a handiwork of the Maulavi or his party.

But evidently Madras did not prove a fruitful soil for his propaganda. So he turned his attention to North India. He made a wide tour, everywhere preaching a *jihad* or religious war against the British, and established his disciples in various localities. No doubt, they carried on the propaganda in their areas while the Maulavi

personally visited big and important cities like Fyzabad and Lakhnau.

While we shall not minimise the importance of this factor, it is difficult, in the present state of our knowledge, to find out, or even to make a general estimate of, the extent to which it influenced the outbreak of 1857. Dr. S. B. Chaudhuri, who regards the outbreak as a war of national independence, has given a long and detailed account of a patriots' meeting held on May 1, 1857, at Shahjahanpur, at the house of Mazhar Karim.[4] He gives the names of the persons, both Hindus and Muslims, who attended the meeting, and long extracts from the speech of Sarfarazali, the Gorakhpur Maulavi. The speech would do credit to the most seditious extremist in the first two decades of the twentieth century, if we only substitute religious frenzy in place of political aspirations for freedom as the impelling motive.

The Maulavi concluded his speech by reminding his audience that the centenary of the Battle of Plassey 'approaches', and asking them, "have I your unanimous vote to declare that the *Kafir* brood shall be stamped out on that date? The whole assembly with one voice cried out· No, sooner than that." The scene of frenzied enthusiasm that followed need not be described "Nothing", says Dr. Chaudhuri, "illustrates more strikingly the spirit of contumacy and revolt which seized the people" than this speech. He admits that "the authenticity of this seditious speech cannot indeed be vouched for". But what he omits to say is that the whole scene, including the speech, is taken from a novel written in 1896 on the basis of the tale of Mariam, a victim of the outbreak of 1857. The author heard the story of Mariam from her own lips but added the necessary setting from his own imagination, for he candidly confesses that he was writing a novel and not history. The speech of Maulavi Sarfarazali has, therefore, no more historical value than the speeches put by poet Nabinchandra Sen in the mouths of Rani Bhabani, Raja Rajballabh, and other alleged conspirators against Siraj-ud-daulla, at the beginning of his famous *Kāvya* (epic poem) ***Palasir Yuddha.*** It would be against all canons of historical criticism to accept, as Dr. Chaudhuri has done, the alleged speech of Sarfarazali, as "typical of the attitude of the general body of the rebels". If no better evidence can be furnished, the least that one can do is to profess ignorance of what that attitude was, and merely take note of the different motives, noted above, that impelled different classes and types of persons. For, this rests upon the unimpeachable testimony of actual facts.

There can be no reasonable doubt, therefore, that the various factors mentioned above were mainly responsible for the general "upsurge of the people", and it was thus that without any preconcerted plan and organization, the mutiny merged itself into a general rising of the civil population of all types and classes. The civil population was undoubtedly spurred on to revolt because of the grave discontent and resentment which different classes of people nursed in their heart for different reasons, but if the mutiny had not extinguished the local authority, the civil population would not have dared to revolt The people's revolt was the effect, and not the cause, of the mutiny.

The outbreak at Muzaffarnagar,[5] on May 14, the earliest instance of civil revolt, may appear to be an exception, for there was no mutiny of local troops preceding it. But when carefully analyzed, it also illustrates the general rule The revclt was precipitated by the action of Mr. Berford, the Magistrate and Collector. He was unnerved by the news of the mutiny at Mirat, followed by the exaggerated and false account of the imminent approach of mutinous troops towards Muzaffarnagar. He at once ordered the Public Offices to be closed for three days. On the 12th evening he heard that the convicts in jail would rise that night, and he immediately fled through the jungle to a village where he spent the night, during which nothing occurred in Muzaffarnagar. On the 13th some officers' bungalows were burnt by the villagers, at the instigation, it is said, of the local 'Syud *zamindars*' It was then decided by Berford to remove the treasure to the Tehseel on the 14th. The Treasury-guard refused to do it and broke open the treasure chests They took away as much as they could carry and left. A number of people who were near by plundered the rest. As there were no regular sepoys, the Magistrate drew off the jail-guard for his own defence, and released the prisoners. As Mr. Grant, at that time the Joint Magistrate and Deputy Collector, says in his report, the people were convinced by this act that the Government rule had ceased to exist. They saw that they could with impunity commit any excesses, that nobody interfered or meddled with them, and that even the incendiaries captured on the previous day were set free with others. The Civil, Criminal, and Collectorate *dufturs* were burnt by the people that night (May 14), and Mr. Grant was decidedly of opinion that the destruction of the records was brought about by the Syuds and that those individuals had spread the false tales of approaching mutineers and dacoits, and had induced them to take shelter in Aboopoorah with the sole object of getting them out of the way and burning the office papers in their absence. Mr. Grant also suspected the Tahsildars and Kotwal

of conniving at such destruction. Violent crimes of all kinds were daily, almost hourly, committed throughout the district, not secretly or by night, but openly and at noon day. It is needless naming the chief crimes; it is sufficient to remark that here, as in other parts of the country the *baniyas* and *mahajans* were in the majority of cases the victims and "fearfully have many of them been made to suffer for their previous rapacity and avarice".[6]

The same scene was enacted at Saharanpur. "The news of the outbreak at Meerut reached Saharanpur on the 12th of May...... The Goojurs and Ranghurs at once commenced plundering; and when the disturbances began in the Moozuffurnagar district, disquiet spread through that of Saharanpur. At first bankers were robbed, or had to pay for exemption from plunder; money-lenders and traders were forced to give up their books of accounts, and vouchers for debts; old feuds were renewed; the first outbreaks were to pay off old feuds, or to clear off accounts, or for the sake of plunder. ....In examining the extent of the damage inflicted by the 'dacoits' at Naukoor, it appeared that all the *mohullas* had been attacked and gutted........ All the government records with the *mahajun's* accounts, bonds, etc., were torn up and scattered over the neighbouring gardens ......"

As in Muzaffarnagar, so in Saharanpur, the notorious lawless elements broke out into an orgy of riots at the news of Mirat, even before the local sepoys had actually mutinied.

According to the official narrative, on which the above account is based, the disturbances in the commencement were less directed against the Government than against particular castes. Ancient tribe or caste feuds were renewed, and the zamindars and villagers took advantage of the general anarchy to obtain from the *mahajans* and the *baniyas* their books of business and bond-debts, etc When the fall of Delhi ceased to be looked upon as imminent, the agricultural communities began to turn their eyes towards the local treasuries and did not scruple to oppose themselves to Government officers and troops.[7]

But the character of the risings continued to be the same after the sepoys had mutinied, killed their officers and released the prisoners in jail. In two respects alone a difference was noticeable. In the first place, the risings became widespread, particularly in Awadh and Rohilkhand, and secondly, local leaders, big or small, established their own *raj*, now that the British officers had vanished and the British *raj* was believed to have come to an end. This has been regarded by many writers as "a vast upsurge of the people". and by not a few as 'war of Indian independence'. One of these writers has des-

cribed as follows the situation at Saharanpur, with a population of about forty thousand, after the sepoys had joined the Gujars and Ranghars, who had commenced their depredations even before the sepoys mutinied. "All throughout this period the turbulent elements robbed the bankers and money-lenders, extorted blackmail from them and sacked the police stations and tahsils. Umrao Singh, the headman of the village of Manakpur in Mangalaur tahsil declared himself a raja, levied money, though he failed in the long run. The tahsil and the thana of Nakur was completely gutted. The magistrate, Robertson, proceeded to punish the refractory villages on 20 June, but the country around rose up to effect the release of the prisoners. It was a war of the villagers—parties with the beat of *dhols* assembled on 22 June, and showed a grit and determination in the fight. Buddhakheri was a strong centre of Gujar disaffection where one Fatua proclaimed himself king of the Gujars."[8] This being the usual pattern of the 'popular upsurge' and 'war of independence', obviously these expressions have to be understood in a special sense.

The same story was repeated in other places. In Bulandshahr "mixed crowds of rebel forces, Gujars, villagers and townsmen took part in wanton destruction of civil and military establishments Offices were gutted, records destroyed, and former proprietors ousted. Many other excesses were committed culminating in the temporary disappearance of the British rule by 29 May".[9]

A scrutiny of these accounts reveals several prominent elements in these early risings. The first was the notorious *goonda* elements of the locality who never miss any opportunity of troubles or disturbances to carry on their nefarious activities. In a way the sepoys encouraged these by opening the jails which became a regular feature of the mutiny. The ex-convicts and *goondas* were naturally joined by other elements of similar nature, and there are some grounds to suppose that most, if not the whole, of plunder and massacre was the work of these people who formed the scum of the population.

Next to the local *goonda* elements, we notice the activities of various marauding tribes, notorious for rapine, plunder and massacre, which formed their principal occupation and the only means of livelihood. The above account of the Gujars and Ranghars at Saharanpur gives us a fair idea of the quick reaction of the mutiny upon these classes of peoples.

It was not long before other classes seized the opportunity to exploit the situation to their advantage. The village Zamindars and villagers took advantage of the general anarchy to obtain from *Mahajans* and *Baniyas* their books of business and bond-debts etc.

The prominent chiefs of various localities could not be expected to sit idle. They took advantage of the general turmoil to regain what they had lost, or to gain new territories and privileges, and, not unoften, also to settle old scores with enemies. It would also appear that, at least at the beginning, the disturbances were less directed against Government than against particular people and classes. A contemporary writer has given a very vivid description of the state of anarchy and confusion that prevailed "in the open country... from Delhi over the whole of the cis-Sutlej States". After referring to the plundering raids and other atrocities perpetrated by the Gujars and other predatory tribes impartially on all classes of people—Europeans and Indians, civil or military—he refers to the activities of the normally peaceful folk as follows:—"Villagers fought with one another about boundary questions decided half a century ago. Hundreds of heads of cattle changed hands; murders and robberies were committed unpunished in the open day".[10]

II. DELHI

When the mutiny broke out at Mirat, the throne of Delhi was occupied by Bahadur Shah II. As mentioned above, the rights, privileges and honour attached to the throne of Delhi had been gradually reduced by the Governor-General. Bahadur Shah assumed the titles of Badshah (Emperor) and Ghazi (holy warrior) His empire hardly extended beyond the Red Palace in Delhi, and his revenue consisted of the annual pension of twelve *lacs* of Rupees paid by the British, the proceeds of some crown-lands near Delhi amounting to about a *lac* and a half, and rents of some houses in the city of Delhi. He felt the same grievances as his father and, following his example, engaged a generous-hearted Englishman to plead his cause with the authorities in England. But George Thompson was no more successful than Rammohan Roy before him.[11]

But Bahadur Shah was more seriously worried about the future prospects of his family. The secret but abortive agreement of the British with Fakir-ud-dīn was not unknown to him, and he was worried by the refusal of the Governor-General to recognize his nomination of Jawan Bakht as his successor. It could hardly be a secret to Bahadur Shah that even the titular dignity and the Red Palace—the only visible symbols of the House of Babur that still remained—would cease to belong to his family after his death. This caused him the greatest mortification, and probably produced the keenest sense of resentment against the British. But whatever feelings he might have nourished in his heart, Bahadur Shah could not ventilate his grievances publicly, and hence silently resigned himself

to his fate. For the Badshah Ghazi was no more a Badshah than he was a Ghazi or warrior. He had no military training or experience, but was rather a poet by inclinations. He wrote verses, sighed for the lost glory of his family, and, surrounded by a band of unscrupulous adventurers, indulged in all kinds of possible and impossible ideas. He seriously believed that he could transform himself into a fly or gnat. He dreamed of recovering the lost empire of his ancestors with the help of Persia, and sent two messengers for the purpose of exploring the situation. But he relied more on charmed amulets than on diplomatic alliance or a well-equipped army for gaining victory and recovering his ancestral throne and dignity. Afflicted with advancing age—he was about ninety—and worn down by worries and mortifications, Bahadur Shah might have peacefully gone to his grave, leaving nothing but a few Urdu verses as his memorial; but fate willed it otherwise.

The first news of the mutiny of the sepoys at Mirat was conveyed to Bahadur Shah by the mutineers themselves. On reaching Delhi on the morning of May 11, they went straight to the Red Fort and called upon His Majesty for help, declaring that they had killed the English at Mirat and had come to fight for the faith. Bahadur Shah was extremely unwilling to have anything to do with this motley crowd that continued pouring into the Red Fort and took position in the courtyard of Diwan-i-Khas. His chief adviser, Hakim Ahsanulla Khan, was of the same mind, and argued with the representatives of the sepoys for a long time. But more and more troops arrived and the Red Fort became a scene of the wildest confusion, quarrels, and dissensions. On the morning of May 12, the whole body of sepoy officers presented *nazar* to Bahadur Shah and described themselves as his faithful soldiers. At last, after a great deal of delay and wavering, and in spite of the warning of Ahsanulla Khan, Bahadur Shah placed himself at the head of the sepoys and assumed the title of the Emperor of Hindusthan.[12]

Bahadur Shah was quite unfit to discharge the responsibility thus thrust upon him, and would have proved a failure in any case. But his task was rendered hopeless from the very beginning by two circumstances. In the first place, the Emperor had no faith in the cause he was reluctantly forced to serve. His loyalty to the British remained unimpaired. One of his first acts was the despatch of a secret express message to the British authorities at Agra warning them of the mutinous outbreak at Mirat and Delhi.[13] He also protected English fugitives from the wrath of the sepoys and even helped some of them to escape. Even when he was adopting measure to restore order in Delhi and set up a machinery to carry on regular civil

administration of the city, his heart was not in that task. While the sepoys were fighting *in his name* against the British and dying in hundreds to retain possession of the city, Bahadur Shah was secretly carrying on treasonable intrigue through an agent of Ahsanulla with the British General, offering to admit British troops secretly into the fort if they only agreed to restore him to his old position. Not only Bahadur Shah himself but his favourite queen Zinnat Mahal and the Shahzadas or princes also carried on similar intrigues both with the military authorities and with Greathed, the Political Agent of the Lieutenant-Governor of N.W.P. attached to the Field-force. The Shahzadas sent several messages to Greathed, and having no satisfactory response from him, approached the British General with "a distinct offer to destroy the Bridge and to enlist the services of the Cavalry, and with their aid to put an end to the Infantry, on condition of favour being shown to the Royal Family." But though the offers of the Shahzadas were not accepted, it appears that there was some secret understanding with Zinnat Mahal.[14]

The second circumstance that proved fatal to the success of the mutiny was the conduct and attitude of the sepoys themselves. The citizens of Delhi looked upon them as an invading army rather than a force fighting for the freedom of the country.

A vivid account of the state of Delhi has been preserved in the diary of Jiwanlal Munshi[15] who was in Delhi at the time Writing under date May 12, i.e the day after the arrival of the mutineers at Delhi, he records· "All trade in the city ceased entirely, for every shop that was opened was cleared of its contents "[16] Ordinary business was suspended and shops were closed There was difficulty in getting supply of rations and though Bahadur Shah, urged on by the turbulent mobs of sepoys, twice passed through the city, asking the people to resume their normal occupation, it had no effect, as the citizens' fear was not allayed They had good reasons for their apprehensions. The spirit of cruelty and indiscipline which characterized the mutinous sepoys at Mirat and other places was not confined to their dealings with the British, but was displayed throughout, even in their treatment of the Indians The sepoys hunted out the fugitive Europeans and Indian Christians and massacred most of them,—men, women and children—and plundered the houses of, and otherwise cruelly treated, those who had given them shelter Even respectable Indians were plundered, insulted, and humiliated on mere report of harbouring fugitives or on suspicion that they were in league with the English. Even the Emperor was powerless to stop the infuriated sepoys. The general condition of the city on May 12 is thus described by Jiwanlal: "From house to house the un-

willing King was distracted by cries and petitions—now from the servants of Europeans who had been murdered, now from the shop-keepers whose shops had been plundered, now from the higher classes whose houses had been broken into—all looked to the King for immediate redress. Appeals were made to him to repress the plunder and rapine now common throughout the city."[17]

On May 15 he writes: "Several respectable men were seized and made to carry burdens to intimidate them and extort money. Such were their sufferings that the better class of city people offered prayers this day for the defeat of the rebels. All valuable property had by this time been buried, and a private police force had been raised by the better class of citizens to protect themselves and their property from plunder and violence."[18]

We find the following entry in Jiwanlal's diary under the date, May 23: "Seeing the atrocities the mutineers were committing in the city, Hakim Ahsanulla Khan induced the King to issue an order commanding the troops to leave the city, on the ground that they would only plunder and cause blood to be shed.. .The soldiers plundered the house of Kanheyal Lal, of Hyderabad, a severe fight having first taken place between the retainers of Kanheyal and the mutineers.... Nawab Mir Ahmed Ali Khan, under instructions from the King, issued orders to seize all the bankers and wealthy men of the city—particularly those favourable to the English—and to extort money from them for the pay of the mutineers. Mirza Mohammed Ali Bey was appointed tehsildar of the Mehrowli. Jiwan Lal's garden and house were this day plundered by the soldiers, of property to the value of 2,000 rupees, on suspicion of his being in communication with the English."[19]

Jiwanlal's diary shows that incidents like these continued almost throughout the period of the siege of Delhi. The following is reported under the date, June 14: "Buldeo Sing, the brother of Lachman Sing, Thanadar of Alipur, was seized and brought to the Kotwali. He was accused of sympathising with the English. He was shot, and his body suspended from a tree. Thirteen bakers residing at the Kabul Gate were dragged from their houses and killed, on being suspected of supplying bread to the English. The shop of Jamna Dass was plundered because he sold *attah* at a high price. The mutineers committed many other oppressive acts this day."[20] On July 25, 400 sepoys plundered the houses of Alap Pershad and others, and carried off property to the value of 50,000 rupees. "As soon as General Mahommed Bakht Khan heard of this he sent off several hundred men to stop the outrage, but these soldiers would not interfere with the plunderers."[21] Gordohan Das was forced on the

same day to pay 2,000 rupees.[22] Rich bankers were placed in confinement on August 19, and were not released till they paid a heavy amount.[23] Even on September 12, when the fate of Delhi was sealed, shop-keepers sent a petition that they were being molested and all the shops were closed.[24]

Jiwanlal's account cannot be regarded as unvarnished truth, for he was no friend of the sepoys who had maltreated him, and his sympathies obviously lay with the English. Nevertheless, it is impossible to dismiss his diary as a deliberate forgery or fabrication, and therefore of no value as historical evidence. For it would require great ingenuity to draw up such a consistent account, interspersed with incidents, sometimes of a very secret nature, which have been corroborated by independent evidence. It is very likely that Jiwanlal magnified the crimes and cruelties of the sepoys to some extent, and depicted only the black side of the sepoys. But, in spite of possible exaggerations, the general state of things described by Jiwanlal cannot be very far from truth, for it is corroborated by independent testimony. There is on record a petition from Chand Khan and Gulab Khan of the Paharganj area that "the sepoys forcibly took away goods from shops without payment and entered houses of the poor people and took away beds, woods, vessels etc."[25] Bahadur Shah, in course of his evidence during his trial, has given a similar picture of the sepoys. It has been suggested that no reliance can be placed on Bahadur Shah's statement, for he naturally tried to save his own skin by throwing all blame on others But on 27 June, long before Delhi fell, and Bahadur Shah was still hopeful of victory, he wrote a letter to his Commander-in-Chief to the following effect: "Not a day has elapsed, since the arrival of the army, and its taking up quarters in the city, that petitions from the towns-people have not been submitted, representing the excesses committed by numerous Infantry Sepoys."[26] This fully vindicates the statements of Jiwanlal, which are also corroborated by several witnesses during the trial of Bahadur Shah, and the records of the British. Besides, as will be shown later, the conduct of the sepoys in other localities, as described by eye-witnesses, is of the same sordid character.

Special reference may be made in this connection to a long statement which Ahsanulla made immediately after the fall of Delhi. It not only refers to plundering and burning inside the city of Delhi, but also cites instances of the sepoys forcibly collecting money in the neighbourhood. He refers to the report of "women killing themselves to be saved from dishonour", and, what is worse still, adds that investigation proved the correctness of this report. He further says

"that information reached the King that the quarter inhabited by the Dasas (a caste of Baniya) was being plundered and that many of them had been shot down by the sepoys."[27]

But the domineering attitude of the sepoys was not confined to the people and chiefs of Delhi. They showed but scant respect to the Emperor himself, even from the very beginning. On May 12, after the King had returned from his first visit round the city, asking in vain the people to open their shops, "he found the courtyard of the Dewan-i-khas crowded with troopers and their horses. They assailed him with loud cries, complaining that the men of the regiment which had mutinied at Delhi had possessed themselves of the treasure from the Delhi Collectorate, intending to keep it, and had refused to share it with the Meerut mutineers. The King, utterly distracted and bewildered in the conflicting counsels, ordered the Princes, who had been appointed to the command of the troops, to send every mutineer out of the city...."[28]

"Towards evening a number of native regimental officers came and again represented the difficulty they experienced in getting rations. Forgetful of the lofty tone of the morning's order, and of the high-toned phraseology expressive of the King's dignity, they addressed him with such disrespectful terms as, "I say, you King! I say, you old fellow!" ("Ari, Badshah'! Ari, Buddha!"). "Listen," cried one, catching him by the hand. "Listen to me", said another, touching the old kng's beard".[29]

Bahadur Shah alleged in his written statement during his trial, that the sepoys paid no respect to him nor acknowledged his authority; they threatened to depose him, kill his queen and other officials, and one day even went to the house of the queen, Zinnat Mahal, intending to plunder it, but did not succeed in breaking open the door. Bahadur Shah said he was virtually the prisoner of the sepoys, who had set up a council of their own in which all matters were discussed and line of action decided upon. But there was no order or discipline among them. "Thus", continues Bahadur Shah, "without my knowledge or orders, they plundered, not only many individuals, but several entire streets, plundering, robbing, killing and imprisoning all they chose; and forcibly extorting whatever sums of money they thought fit from the merchants and other respectable residents of the city, and appropriating such exactions to their own private purposes .I did whatever they required, otherwise they would immediately have killed me. This is universally known".[30] Indeed things came to such a pass that Bahadur Shah, disgusted of his life, resolved to adopt the garb of a religious mendicant and go to Mecca. But the sepoys would not allow him to go.

If contemporary evidence is to be believed, the sepoys, perhaps with honourable exceptions, cared more for money than for their country or countrymen. Main-ud-din, an eye-witness of the events at Delhi,[31] writes: "The rebels were becoming clamorous for pay. They were really laden with money, but they wished to extort as much more as they could. They threatened to leave the King's service unless paid...."[32] Jiwanlal records in his diary on May 15, i.e. only four days after the Mutiny had broken out in Delhi: "News was received that the mutineers were intimidating the city people, and that 200 troopers, having plundered a quantity of money, had deserted and gone off to their homes, and had in turn been attacked by the Gujars and plundered'.[33] The entry in his diary on May 21, is as follows: "The house of Sobha Chand Kaest was this day plundered on the charge that he was in league with the English and supplying them with news. It was reported to the King that the mutineers had possessed themselves of much money and were buying gold mohurs at 32 rupees apiece, and that many mutineers who had left the city with money had been plundered of everything and had returned to the city only with their lives".[34] We are further told that dishonest men took advantage of this craze for gold to defraud the sepoys and then "the soldiers revenged themselves upon the innocent people of the Mohalla."[35]

As mentioned above, the sepoys of Mirat quarrelled with those of Delhi over the loot of the latter place. Similarly, outbreaks took place over the rate of pay, on May 28. Jiwanlal writes: "Order was issued to-day to pay the mutineers: this was done at the request of Mahbub Ali Khan: deductions were ordered to be made on account of the sums already paid to them; nine for sowars and seven for infantry was fixed A great uproar ensued. The cavalry demanded Rs. 30 for their pay, and no deduction for charges paid. The Subahdars of the Delhi Regiment accepted Rs. 7 as their pay. A violent abusive altercation followed between the Meerut cavalry and the mutineers of Delhi regiments. The Meerut sowars accused the Delhi regiments of having enriched themselves by plunder, whereas the Meerut men had by their good behaviour reaped nothing by plunder and robbery. They refused to receive Rs. 9. The foot Sepoys replied that the Meerut men were rebellious and utterly bad. Not only had they been the first to mutiny and kill their officers, whose salt they had eaten—and led others to do likewise—but they were desirous to quarrel and fight with their own countrymen. The Delhi Sepoys said they repented of their great fault—that they had not done their duty and blown them from their guns when they first reached Delhi. Fierce passions were so raised, that at one time there

was every probability of a serious encounter. The King s servants rushed in between the parties, and with great efforts quieted both sides, Mahbub Ali Khan promising the cavalry Rs. 20 pay per mensem".[36]

All these indicate a complete break-down of the administrative machinery set up by Bahadur Shah. Another serious handicap was the lack of mutual confidence. If the Emperor, the chiefs, the aristocracy and the common people had causes of legitimate grievances against the sepoys, the sepoys had strong suspicions about their loyalty to the cause. They suspected them all as being attached to the English, intriguing with them, harbouring the fugitives and supplying regular news to the British force besieging Delhi. They brought open charge against the King, his favourite queen, Zinnat Mahal, and his chief adviser, Ahsanullah Khan. Jiwanlal records the following incident in his diary under the date, May 16.

"The sepoys assembled early this morning before the Palace, threatening the King and his officers, accusing them of saving the lives of European ladies and gentlemen and concealing them in the Fort, and through them communicating with the Europeans at Meerut....I learned today that nearly forty Europeans were concealed in the King's Palace. The sepoys went to the Palace in great anger, as they said they had seized a messenger with a letter cursing the mutineers. The sepoys threatened to kill Ahsanullah Khan and Nâwab Mahbub Ali Khan, and also threatened to take away Zinnat Mahal Begum Sahiba and keep her as a hostage for the King's loyalty. There was a great uproar in the Palace, the sepoys on the one hand, and the King's household on the other, contending with violent language and harsh vociferations."[37]

Fuller details of the incident are given by Chunilal, the newswriter, in his statement submitted during the trial of Bahadur Shah. This is also written in the form of a diary narrating the events from day to day. Under the date, May 16, he writes: "The troopers and infantry soldiers, accompanied by their officers, attended and presented a letter bearing the seals of the physician Ahsan Ulla Khan and Nawab Mahbub Ali Khan, which they said they had intercepted at the Delhi gate of the city, and complained that the physician and the Nawab had sent this letter to the English, inviting them to come into the city immediately, and proposing that provided the English should agree to acknowledge Mirza Jawan Bakht, the son of the King by the queen Zinnat Mahal, as heir-apparent, they would on their part engage to seize and make over all the soldiery now in Delhi". The *letter* was shown to Ahsan Ulla and Mahbub Ali who declared it to be a forgery. The sepoys however did not believe them and "drew their

swords and surrounded Ahsan Ulla declaring their firm belief that he maintained an understanding with the English". "The King assured the soldiers that he was associated with them in a common cause, desiring them to place every confidence in Ahsan Ulla, Mahbub Ali and Queen Zinnat Mahal The sepoys pointed out that Ahsan Ulla had in his custody European prisoners and obviously kept them for maintaining friendly relations with the British. They therefore took away from his custody all the 52 European prisoners, men, women, and children, and killed them with swords". "The occurrence", writes Chunilal, "caused a great excitement amongst the Hindus throughout the city, who said that these Purbeahs who had committed this heinous and atrocious cruelty could never be victorious against the English".[38]

That the suspicion of the sepoys was quite justified is proved by the secret intrigues disclosed by British records, as mentioned above.[39] The proverb, 'like master, like servant', was perhaps nowhere better illustrated than by the conduct of the chiefs who joined the revolt of Delhi. Many of them were playing a double game like Bahadur Shah. Raja Nahar Singh of Ballabhgarh sent supplies and men to Delhi to support the revolt, but assured the British of his staunch friendship. The Nawab of Jhujhur did the same.[40] Some of the chiefs joined or utilized the revolt to serve personal ends. Munshi Jiwanlal records (July 31) that Nawab Ahmed Ali Khan, chief of Farukhnagar, complained to the Emperor that Rao Tulla Ram of Rewari was going to attack him. At the same time a letter was read sent by Tulla Ram to Ghulam Muhammed Khan, with the words: "Are you intoxicated that you think the English are going away from Hindustan? They will most assuredly return and will destroy you". Yet this Tullaram paid '*Nazar*' and lip-allegiance to the King. But Tullaram was paid back in his own coin. He had sent some money to Rewari, which some landholders seized.

According to the testimony of Ahsanulla who, as the confidential adviser of the Emperor, was in a position to know the truth, letters were written to a number of chiefs. He then adds: "Replies were received from the chiefs of Jhujhur, Ballabhgarh, Farrukhnagar and Khan Bahadur Khan of Bareilly, but none were received from Jaipur, Alwar, Jodhpur, Bikanir, Gwalior, Jaisalmir, Patiala or Jummoo. These latter chiefs sent no reply, because they had no inclination to side with the King. The four chiefs who sent replies professed allegiance to the King and the first two of them sent some troops. But they excused their personal attendance on the ground that their absence would unsettle their countries". Thus while only a few

showed any inclination to support the revolt, even the chiefs who went furthest, namely those of Jhujhur and Ballabhgarh, are definitely known to have been playing a double game as mentioned above.

Bahadur Shah is also said to have written two letters to Baiza Bai to whom reference has been made above, but she sent no reply. It is, however, curious that Bahadur Shah made no approach to either Kunwar Singh or Rani of Jhansi, and got no favourable response from Nana with whom he communicated through a confidential agent about two months after the outbreak of the Mutiny.[41]

The facts, mentioned above, do not support the view that Delhi was a centre of peoples' revolt, or national struggle, or that there was an organized conspiracy to overthrow the British rule. It is not unlikely that we have an exaggerated or partial account and that there were other facts which would induce one to moderate this view. But such facts have not yet come to light On the other hand, even as a centre of the mutiny of sepoys, the situation in Delhi hardly offers a pleasant picture. Reference has been made above to the greed of the sepoys which led them to plunder Europeans and Indians alike and caused bitter wranglings among themselves over the share of the loot. Instances are on record where the sepoys, after amassing wealth, returned to their homes to enjoy it without any further thought about the cause for which they fought.[42]

There is indirect evidence that a section of the military had a wider vision and rose above mere considerations of personal gains. Their views are reflected in the proclamations issued at Delhi. One of them, issued on behalf of the officers of the sepoys, inviting the co-operation of the people, runs as follows:

"To all Hindoos and Mussulmans, citizens and servants of Hindustan, the Officers of the Army now at Delhi and Meerut send greeting: It is well known that in these days all the English have entertained these evil designs—first, to destroy the religion of the whole Hindustani Army, and then to make the people by compulsion Christians. Therefore we, *solely on account of our religion,*[43] have combined with the people, and have not spared alive one infidel, and have re-established the Delhi dynasty on these terms Hundreds of guns and a large amount of treasure have fallen into our hands; therefore, it is fitting that whoever of the soldiers and people dislike turning Christians should unite with one heart, and, acting courageously, not leave the seed of these infidels remaining. It is further necessary that all Hindoos and Mussulmans unite in this struggle, and, following the instructions of some respectable people, keep themselves secure, so that good order may be maintained, the poorer classes kept contented, and they themselves be exalted to rank and dignity".[44]

This proclamation is interesting in more ways than one. In the first place, it shows that the cause for which the sepoys fought

was the removal, for ever, of the danger of mass conversion to Christianity by destroying the English. There is no reference to the abstract ideal of freedom or the struggle for achieving independence which is now gratuitously assumed to be their impelling motive. Secondly, it calls upon the Hindus and Mussulmans to unite in the struggle against the English. Thirdly, as the sepoys assembled in Delhi from different parts of North India, the above views may be taken to represent the general feelings which actuated the sepoys in different parts of the country.

The idea behind the proclamation was quite good, but the real question is how far did it influence the activities of the people. The proclamation rightly laid stress on the unity between the Hindus and Muslims, but one finds a lack of mutual trust between them in Delhi There was a clear manifestation of it even while the British attack upon Delhi was imminent, and the fate of the whole struggle depended upon its successful defence by the combined efforts of all communities. Thus we read in Jiwanlal's diary, under the date, May 19: "This day the standard of the Holy War was raised by the Mahommedans in the Jumma Masjid. The people of Dharampur and the low characters of the city were concerned in this act. The King was angry and remonstrated, because such a display of fanaticism would only tend to exasperate the Hindus"[45] On May 20, he writes· "Moulvie Mahommed Said demanded an audience, and represented to the King that the standard of Holy War had been erected for the purpose of inflaming the minds of the Mahommedans against the Hindus. The King answered that such a *jehad* was quite impossible, and such an idea an act of extreme folly, for the majority of the Purbeah soldiers were Hindus. Moreover, such an act would create internecine war, and the result would be deplorable. It was fitting that sympathy should exist among all classes It was pointed out that the Hindus were leaning towards an alliance with the English and had no sympathy with the Mahommedans, and were already holding themselves apart. A deputation of Hindu officers arrived to complain of the war against Hindus being preached. The King replied· 'The Holy War is against the English, I have forbidden it against the Hindus'.. At three o'clock Hakim Ahsanullah Khan represented that the soldiers were looting in the city, and requested that they should be expelled To get rid of them. orders were this day issued to Mirza Mogul to proceed with a strong force towards Meerut to attack any English force assembled there".[46]

The account of Jiwanlal is confirmed by the following extract of a letter written by Major General T. Reed from his camp at Delhi to Lawrence, the Chief Commissioner of the Panjāb "They

are displaying the green flag in the city and bullying the Hindus who are praying for our Government—so says our secret intelligence".[47] This letter is dated June 14, 1857. Chunilal also refers to the incident in his written statement during the trial of Bahadur Shah.

To judge, therefore, from the data so far available, one must admit that there was hardly any combined effort or even unity of purpose between the sepoys and the Hindu and Muslim citizens of Delhi, though it was regarded as the centre of the general revolt against the English. Delhi presented a scene of chaos and confusion, of rapine and plunder, and intrigues and dissensions. The sepoys had definitely broken off from the British and burnt their boats. But not so the others. It was but natural that the sepoys would suspect them of loyalty to the British, and it is now known that their suspicions were not unjust or unfounded. Therefore the sepoys harshly treated all—both high and low—in Delhi, and this alienated them and made them wish for the return of the British. The sepoys were rude and insolent to the Emperor and the members of high family because they rightly suspected their loyalty, and this very fact probably increased the royal family's dislike to the mutineers and turned them more and more towards the English for support. There was thus a vicious circle, daily widening the gulf between the sepoys and the civil population. No one seems to have trusted another, and everyone's hand was against his neighbour.

The situation might have been considerably improved if the sepoys could distinguish themselves by some great military achievements. But their performance was hopelessly disappointing, as will be related later. This was due to several factors other than military skill and courage in which the sepoys were not deficient.

There was organizational difficulty. At first the King appointed Prince Mirza Moghul Commander-in-Chief, and conferred high military ranks on other princes. But they proved utterly incompetent and could not keep the sepoys under proper control. Bahadur Shah—it must be said to his credit—honestly tried to do his duty towards the people, though without success. He reprimanded in strong terms, on June 27, both Mirza Moghul, the Commander-in-Chief of the rebel army, and Mirza Khair Sultan, who held the rank of a Colonel, for failure to keep the sepoys in check. "But the princes on whom the King had to depend for maintenance of law and order could not always resist the temptation of helping themselves to other people's property. From an undated petition submitted by two merchants, Jugal Kishore and Sheo Prasad, we learn that vexation and annoyance were caused by the functionaries of the State and the princes,

and royal troops still came to plunder their house and threatened to arrest them".[48] On July 1 and 2 the troops of Bareilly, with their Commander, Bakht Khan, arrived at Delhi. As he had a long military experience and belonged to a noble family, the King appointed him Commander-in-Chief in place of Mirza Moghul who was appointed Adjutant General. The other princes holding military ranks were much worse. "On the 4th July, two days after Subadar Bakht Khan had been invested with the office of the Commander-in-Chief, one Ahsan-ul-Huq complained about the dissolute and lawless conduct of Mirza Abu Bakr, the King's grandson; and Mirza Moghul was ordered to recover the looted property. The very next day a more serious complaint was lodged against this prince by no less a person than Imani Begam, a daughter-in-law of the first Bahadur Shah. She represented, "that the night before Abu Bakr, in a state of intoxication, came to her house with several sowars to seize her, and fired several shots with rifles and pistols, and beat a number of people of the Mohalla. The police arrived, but Abu Bakr attacked the Kotwal with a sword, had him seized and taken away in custody, insulted him, and finally plundered her house". The King was very indignant. He deprived the offender of his military rank and ordered him to be arrested But the prince did not find it difficult to evade punishment. The King disgraced the princes and directed them to keep away from his levies. The headmen of the Mohallas were notified that the princes were to be treated like common men if they were found guilty of any lawless action. But it does not appear that royal displeasure had any sobering effect on these wayward youths".[49]

But a mere change of command could not do much good when the sepoys did not possess even a modicum of military discipline. From the very beginning they showed a spirit of indiscipline to an amazing degree. This is best illustrated by their conduct towards Bahadur Shah and the shop-keepers and other citizens of Delhi as mentioned above. The military officers reported on May 14 that unless food were supplied, the sepoys could not be prevented from plundering.[50] The turbulence and insolence of the sepoys knew no bounds. Within a week they grew tired of Bahadur Shah. Jiwanlal tells us that on May 17 they deposed Bahadur Shah, as he was too old and infirm, and elected prince Abu Bakr in his place.[51] Evidently the issue was not pressed, and Bahadur Shah continued to be the nominal king, daily suffering insults and humiliations from the sepoys.

But the climax of indiscipline and insubordination was reached when they refused to serve under Bakht Khan as Commander-in-

Chief, and actually sent a petition to the King to that effect.[52] When an army assumes the power and responsibility of making and unmaking the King, and exercises a veto upon the appointment of their Commander-in-Chief; and when the officers openly plead inability to control their soldiers and save the civil population from their plunder; its chance of gaining success in a prolonged and sustained struggle may be regarded as negligible. Military history has shown again and again, that valour, courage, heroism and self-sacrifice of individual soldiers cannot make up for the lack of discipline of the army as a whole.

The character of Bahadur Shah, whom the sepoys themselves chose as their leader, was another handicap to their success The sepoys had come from different and distant regions and had no cohesive force to bind them together. It was necessary to weld them into a compact and organized body and keep up their fighting spirit. All these needed a strong and efficient leader. Bahadur Shah was absolutely unfit for this task. He was advanced in age—almost a dotard—, and lacked military knowledge and personal bravery. The following incident recorded by Main-ud-din is an interesting commentary on his leadership of the great revolt: "The mutineers represented to the King that the sepoys were reluctant to attack the English, and demanded his presence in the field. This he promised to give. A large force was ordered to assemble in the evening. The King headed the force and passed by the Delhi Gate, and showed himself to the assembled troops. Passing by the Lal Dighi Tank he went on towards the Lahore Gate. One of the Palace dependants was substituted for the King, who secretly retired to the city by a back way This show of force ended in nothing. The troops gradually moved back to their own quarters, and the threatened attack ended in smoke".[63]

The deficiency on the part of the King was hardly supplied by the Commander-in-Chief, Bakht Khan, who "was a braggart and hardly possessed the qualities expected of a commanding officer".[64] Indeed, the most significant trait in the war between the sepoys and the English was the perfect contrast shown by the two in respect of leadership, strategy and unity of plan and action. This was well illustrated in the grim fight round the city of Delhi which will be described in a later section.

III. N. W. PROVINCES

The state of things in Delhi has been described at some length, partly because it was the nerve-centre of the movement, and partly because it is a prototype of what happened in other localities where

the mutiny of sepoys merged in or led to the revolt of the people under a local leader. This is illustrated by the outbreaks in Rohilkhand which also, like Delhi, was entirely rid of British authority, civil or military, as all the British officers were either killed or left their station.

The chief centre of revolt was Bareilly where the sepoys suddenly and unexpectedly rose on 31 May, and the British officers fled for their lives. According to the account of a Bengali gentleman,[55] the cavalry regiment was loyal, and gallopped to the help of the British officers, but the latter mistook them as pursuers, and rode forward as best they could without looking back to see the friendly signal. The cavalry regiment thereupon joined the mutineers.

Khan Bahadur Khan was the natural leader of the Rohillas. His grandfather, Hafiz Rahmat Khan, the ruler of Rohilkhand, was defeated and killed by the Nawab of Awadh with the help of British troops lent by Warren Hastings. But though the Nawab annexed Rohilkhand, he had to cede it to the British. As the head of the ruling family, Khan Bahadur Khan got a monthly stipend of one hundred rupees from the British Government, and he also enjoyed pension as a judicial officer in the British service

Khan Bahadur Khan presents an analogy with Bahadur Shah in many respects. His family was ruined by the British and he had sore grievances against them, but being old and infirm, and a man of pacific disposition, he nursed his grievances at heart but never harboured any design of active resistance against the British. He was friendly to the British, and on May 30, warned the Commissioner of the impending mutiny. The latter writes in his report· "He shook hands with me and his last words were significant, *apne jan buchao* or look out for your life".[56] Yet when the successful mutiny of the troops heralded the end of the British rule, Khan Bahadur Khan assumed the administration as viceroy on behalf of the Emperor of Delhi He was either carried away by the tide of rebellion or was unwilling to see another elevated to the position which, he thought, was his due as the legitimate heir of the last independent ruler of Rohilkhand.

He began his reign by ordering the execution of all the English, and issuing a long proclamation enunciating the causes and general principles of the revolution, to which reference will be made later. He appointed district officers of different grades, began to collect revenue, and set up a regular system of administration broad-based on the sympathy and support of the Hindus and Muslims. He sent *nazar* and presents to the Emperor at Delhi and received

the firman of investiture as Viceroy. He appointed Hindus to important posts, and many chiefs, both Hindu and Muslim, acknowledged him as Lord. But the communal jealousy was too deep to be uprooted, and ruined the chances of a good administration. Sobha Ram, the head of the Revenue Department, was not liked by the Muslims, and one day, during his absence, a Muslim crowd forcibly entered into his house on the plea of searching for hidden Englishmen and plundered it Mir Alam Khan, a relative of Khan Bahadur Khan, attacked the house of a respectable Hindu, named Baldeo Gir Gosain, and threatened him and his wife with violence. Gosain killed him in self-defence. But though Gosain was tried for this murder and acquitted, he was killed by Mir Alam's brother who got off scot-free Hindu officers were despoiled Businessmen were heavily taxed and payment was enforced by severe measures Not only some of them but even high officials of the newly established Government were secretly helping the British [57] In Budaon Thakur Harlal of Bakshiena collected his clan and declared himself independent of Delhi and his Nazim, Khan Bahadur.[57a]

We possess a long narrative of the mutiny at Bareilly written by Durgadas Bandopadhyaya, a Bengali gentleman in the employ of the British army. He was present there and had ample opportunities of seeing things for himself and securing information from reliable sources Here we find almost an exact replica of the tales of woe and miserv suffered by the people at the hands of the sepoys as witnessed at Delhi by Munshi Jiwanlal and Main-ud-din. Khan Bahadur Khan, the nominal ruler of Bareilly, was in a helpless condition like Bahadur Shah, and Bakht Khan wielded the real power There was no discipline among the sepoys, who were engaged in indiscriminately looting the shops and plundering the rich and poor alike. As in Delhi, many sepoys amassed a rich booty and returned home. Most cruel tortures were applied to extort money from the people. The Hindus and Muslims were forced to reveal their hidden treasure by the threat of being forced to take respectively the flesh of cows and pigs. Men were made to sit on boiling cauldrons with the same object. Plunder, theft, robbery and rape were the order of the day. A circumstantial narrative of the indignities suffered by a rich woman of the town, named Panna, in the hands of the sepoys, makes most painful reading. The demon of communalism also raised its head. The Muslims spat over the Hindus and openly defiled their houses by sprinkling them with cow's blood and placing cow's bones within the compounds. Concrete instances are given where Hindu sepoys came into clash with the Muslim hooligans engaged in defiling Hindu houses, and a communal riot

ensued. The Hindus, oppressed by the Muslims, were depressed at the success of the mutiny, and daily offered prayers to God for the return of the English. Even many Muslims wanted the English to return. Large number of persons were recruited as mercenaries and joined the mutineers on payment of Rs. 5, 6, or 7 per month. The mutineers were very hard on the Bengali residents of Bareilly. Many of them were whipped, and seven were condemned to death, merely on suspicion and without any regular charge being framed against them.[58]

Another important centre of revolt was Farrukhabad. The cantonment at Fategarh was about six miles from this place The sepoys of the 10th N.I. mutinied on June 18 and formally placed the Nawab of Furrukhabad on the *musnud* (throne) under a royal salute, and tendered their allegiance to him They had seized the treasure, but when the new Government demanded it, they resolutely refused to surrender a rupee Even when the mutinous sepoys of 41st N.I. from the neighbouring district of Sitapur asked for a share of it, they refused to divide the spoil Many sepoys of the 10th N.I. went home with their share of the loot and then there ensued a fight between the two groups—the remnant of the 10th and 41st N I.—in which several sepoys on both sides were killed. At last, the survivors joined together in attacking the fort which fell, and many British were killed, or drowned in course of their flight The Nawab, Tuffuzzal Husain Khan, then set up an administration with the help of the old native officials. He made an attempt to conciliate the Hindus who formed the majority of the Sitapur regiment, but communal riots broke out here and there.[59]

It is interesting to note that not only local chiefs but even Government officials sometimes made themselves masters of the territory evacuated by the British The most notable instance is that of Fatehpur. It was not a military station, but had about sixty or seventy sepoys as treasury-guards The civil population, assisted by escaped jail birds and roving bands of sepoys, rose in rebellion, released the local prisoners, plundered the treasury, and burnt a number of Government offices. All the European officers left except Mr. Tucker, the Judge, who held out till he was killed. After the British were thus liquidated, Hikmatulla, a Deputy-Magistrate, began to rule the district in the name of Nana.[60]

The outbreak at Bijnor possesses some features of special interest. It was not a military station and offers an undiluted picture of the revolt of the civil population. On May 19, the news of Mirat let loose not only all the lawless elements but even more respectable

classes. The plunder of *tahsils*, burning, and other usual excesses were committed by the Gujars, Banjars, Mewatis, Jats, Chauhans, and escaped prisoners over an extensive area. Even more respectable classes joined in the fray, the lead being taken by Mahmud Khan, Nawab of Nazibabad, who arrived at the place with a band of sturdy Pathans to take possession of the rich treasures which were kept at the station. The Magistrate, however, unable to save the money in any other way, threw it into a well, the mouth of which could be defended from the roof of the treasury building. The Nawab had brought a number of empty carts to carry away the money, but was thwarted by the Hindu Zamindars and sepoys, on leave, who came to the aid of the Magistrate. But the revolt at Bareilly cut off Bijnor from all communications with the outside British authorities, and naturally encouraged the Nawab. The Magistrate, therefore, through the good offices of a loyal Government servant, who afterwards became famous as Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, entered into an agreement with the Nawab by which the latter was placed in charge of the district for a period of ten days, during which, it was expected, Delhi would fall and the Magistrate would be able to return in full force. But as Delhi did not fall, and the Magistrate did not return, the Nawab proclaimed himself ruler of the district under the King of Delhi. He had already received the money in the treasury under the agreement and now fished up the remainder of the money from the well After setting himself firmly in his authority, the Nawab began to oppress the Hindu chiefs. These, however, combined and drove him from Bijnor. Then followed a bitter and prolonged fight between the Hindus and the Muslims in which the ultimate victory rested with the latter This was celebrated by a wanton massacre of unoffending Hindus. But soon a dispute arose between the Muslim leaders themselves, and the power was shared by three of them. They held it till April, 1858. During this period freebooters from neighbouring districts joined the party, and burned and plundered the neighbouring localities, including the two sacred sites of the Hindus, viz., Haridvar and Kanakhal.[61]

Bareilly, Farrukhabad, and Bijnor furnish typical pictures of the numerous tiny kingdoms that were established all over Rohilkhand as a result of the withdrawal of the British. Though some of them nominally acknowledged the authority of Delhi, they were all independent for all practical purposes. They rose and fell like meteor, and before a year was over, vanished, all of them, leaving behind nothing but sad memories of rapine and plunder, occasionally enlivened by the stories of heroic courage shown by some of the leaders in their life-and-death struggle against the British force.

In some places, as in Moradabad, these tiny kingdoms, left by the British as parting gifts, proved a veritable apple of discord. Gulzarali, a Sayyid of ruined fortune, proclaimed himself Viceroy of the King of Delhi at Amroha, 21 miles from the city of Moradabad where the sepoys mutinied on 3 June. The 29th Regiment proclaimed Mujoo Khan governor of Moradabad, while the artillery chose Asadali Khan. Another candidate was Abdul Ali Khan, the uncle of Nawab Yusuf Ali Khan of Rampur who came down to Moradabad early in June and received salute and held *darbars*. As soon as he returned to Rampur, a proclamation was issued on 17 June in favour of Mujoo Khan. Some of the Muslim nobles joined his government, and a *jihad* was proclaimed against the English But the Nawab of Rampur was loyal to the British and really held the district for them in spite of the revolt of a number of Muslim leaders. The communal bitterness, as usual, marked the outbreak.[62]

Shahjahanpur, another centre of popular rising, tells the same tale. On 31 May, the mutinous sepoys, excited by Surfuraz Ali, a Maulavi of Gorakhpur, killed a number of Europeans, two of them at the church The survivors found a temporary refuge with the Zamindar of Pawain, but while proceeding towards Aurangabad were cruelly massacred While the Maulavis and Ghazis were dominating the city, "the villagers broke out into rebellion; tahsils were plundered, records were destroyed and police stations sacked Valuable materials connected with the sugar refinery and rum factory of Messrs Carew and Co. were gutted by the people of the neighbouring villages nearly twenty in number. On June 1, a procession proclaiming the overthrow of the British rule was led by Hamid Hasan Khan and Nizamali Khan. The rule of the Rohillas under Khan Bahadur Khan was announced with Qadirali Khan and Ghulam Hussain Khan as local chiefs. But the mutual jealousies of the Mahomedan rulers and the resistance to their exactions by the Rajput chiefs who were killed in large numbers by Mardanali Khan in a fierce encounter, led to an indifferent situation. No less depressing was the hostile attitude of Ghulam Kadir Khan who replaced Qadirali Khan as nazim and appointed his own men as officers". Ahmad Yar Khan, a tahsildar, called in the aid of Ismail Khan of Bareilly to crush the Rajputs [63]

The revolutionary outbreaks of civil population took place over such an extensive area in the region now known as Uttar Pradesh, that it is not possible to refer, even briefly, to all the affected localities. Nevertheless, as the 'popular upsurge' has been constructed as a struggle for national independence, it is necessary to form an accurate view of its nature. This can best be done by referring to the inci-

dents that took place in a few selected localities. The following summary is based upon an official publication entitled *"Narratives of Events Attending the Outbreak of Disturbances"* [64] It was compiled by the various District Officers and the Divisional Commissioners in the North-Western Provinces in obedience to the instructions contained in the General Order No. 212 of 30 April, 1858, and contains almost a day to day account of the incidents that happened under the very eyes of the officials concerned, or of which they got information from men who witnessed them. Whatever we might think of the views and comments of these officers, the events recorded by them may be regarded as fairly authentic The resemblance between the incidents recorded by different officials in different localities is a strong evidence in support of their general accuracy. Besides, the general picture that emerges out of these accounts is fully corroborated by the accounts of contemporary Indians to which reference has been made above. In any case, it is not possible to get a more authentic detailed account of the various local outbreaks. It is interesting to note that even those writers, who represent the outbreak of 1857 as a national war of independence, have freely drawn upon these accounts, at least whenever they suited their purpose. Most of the passages in the following summary are verbatim quotations of these reports, though, here and there, they have been condensed without making any substantial or material change. Many details have necessarily been omitted.

A. *Budaun*[65]

The popular upsurge at Budaun is instructive in so far as it shows very clearly how different classes used the movement to their own advantage. Inhabitants of some villages commenced plundering travellers, while those of others plundered the boats laden with grain belonging to 'Beoparees' (corn-dealers), which were moored on the *ghats* of the Gangā.

The Aheers of Nundpoor, Lawur and others banded together and murdered Heera Singh and Kulloo Singh, Zamindars of Putheria; they wounded Gopal Singh, the brother of the above, and plundered their property. The Narrative contains many gruesome details on the basis of which Dr. S. B. Chaudhuri describes the progress of popular agitation at Budaun in the following words:

"Though internal dissensions between the different communities weakened the basis of the movement, the popular fury was there to feed sedition. Blackmail was freely levied from all the baniyas and mahajans, and valuable indigo factories were gutted and even the iron boilers were melted down for shot and records were burnt ex-

tensively. While the masses had done everything to efface all traces of British rule, the talukdars took the opportunity of expelling the auction purchasers, and resumed possession of their hereditary states".[66] Many Government servants, mostly Hindus, took service under the rebels and more than fifty chiefs carried on rapine and violence all over the district.

B. *Aligarh*[67]

"Before the middle of June, the Chohans of the Pergunnah, intent on revenge, called in the Jats to their help, attacked Khyr, plundered and destroyed nearly all the government buildings, as well as the houses of *bunyahs* and *mahajans*. In July a regular government was set up by the rebels under Nusseemoollah.

...Feuds: The old Rajpoot and Jat feuds raged strongly in the western parts of this district, and towards Saidabad, in the Muttra district, and was only stopped by the fall of Delhi. The feeling of animosity between Hindoos and Mahomedans was also generally bitter in the towns of this district, especially after the excesses of Nusseemoollah and the elevation by us of Thakoor Gobind Singh. As to the behaviour of the people to the Christians, only one Christian was murdered. The refugees were given shelter by the people.

Of the European-owned indigo factories, a very large one was plundered and burnt by the villagers, i.e., Mr. Nichterlein's, and three others were plundered by mutineer troops; the other considerable ones were saved by the *zemindars*, who had the sense to perceive that their destruction would benefit no one. The records of the Sudder cutcherry, and those of four of eight tehseels, were destroyed; of these one act of destruction only was purely the work of villagers, i e. the case of Khyr. In the other cases, the populace took a share after order had been first upset, or plunder commenced by mutineer troops. As elsewhere, the people plundered one another freely. Two towns of importance were plundered; Khyr to the amount of one lac of rupees, and Hurdooah Gunge, four lacs; these estimates are moderate. Coel was also a great deal plundered by Mewatees, etc. of the town, by passing rebel troops, by Nuseemoollah during his 11 days' reign, and by our own troops (British troops). There was an attack on Mr. Watson at Mudroc by the Coel Mahomedans on June 30, and on Major Burlton at Iglas by the Jats. The rise of the Mahomedan *zemindars* and other inhabitants of Atrowlee (September 25) leading to the murder of Mahomed Allee Tehseeldar, was a case of worst description. The influential inhabitants, chiefly converted Mahomedans of old, bore turbulent character. During the disturbed months, they took the management of

the town into their own hands. Early in September, Mahomed Allee was deputed by Mr. Cocks as Joint Magistrate, with Daood Khan as Nazim; but the *zemindars* refused to acknowledge him and on September 25, when the Mahomedans (at the time unaware of the fall of Delhi) broke out into open rebellion, he unfortunately left the *tehseel* building and was murdered. I never saw him but I have little doubt that government has seldom had a better servant. The behaviour of Ghaus Khan of Secundra Rao and of the Mahomedans of Coel, has been mentioned above. The only other case of marked rebellion among men of consideration is that of Mungal Singh and Mahtab Singh, Rajpoot *zemindars* of Akrabad, who after the plunder of Akrabad *tehseel* treasury by sepoys, permitted the destruction of the records by their own people, refused all aid to the tehseeldar, and generally lived a life of open rebellion. Though aid in the struggle has been in many instances rendered us by the natives, especially by the Hindoos, after they had received a foretaste of a Mahomedan government, still their general attitude must be characterised as apathetic. The large number of persons who had so much to gain from the overthrow of our government were content to annex their lost estates and await the result of the struggle..."

C. *Mathura*[68]

"The news of the insurrection and the proclamation of the king of Delhi had now become known among the native population, and the country immediately became disturbed. The disturbances were chiefly attacks on *buniahs* and ejectment of new *zemindars* by the old...A large number of new police had been raised and I endeavoured to raise new *sowars*, but with very little success. The great protection of the city consisted in the *seths* Radha Kishen and Gobind Das, who raised a large body of men at their own expenses and by their influence kept the other inhabitants quiet They also lent Captain Nixon two brass guns. .The disturbances in the district had been increasing both in number and enormity. Kuer Dildar Ally Khan, a large *zemindar* in Pergunnah Maot, was murdered by his villagers. On the 23rd May, Omrow Bahadoor, a relative of his who had estates in Pergunnah Nohjheel had been besieged in his house, but on the approach of our force, the villagers had retired and he made his escape. Several other murders were committed and other outrages, the particulars of which I do not remember...The news of the mutiny had spread with a great rapidity and the whole country had risen almost instantaneously. We were fired from several villages and had several narrow escapes. On reaching Muttra Mr. Burlton put the treasures on carts and gave

the word to march. The Subahdar said "where"? "To Agra, of course," Mr. Burlton replied, on which a shout arose "no, to Delhi, to Delhi". Mr. Burlton exclaimed "you traitors", and he was shot dead by a sepoy The sepoys then set fire to the office; the flames were the first notice the Europeans in the station had of the Mutiny; they instantly left and all succeeded in making their escape to Agra; the office being well on fire, the sepoys marched off with the treasure; they sent a detachment to release the prisoners in jail. The jail guard at once joined them; they then marched on towards Delhi. They burnt two bungalows besides the office, but did no other damage; they, however, burnt all the government buildings on the road, customs *chowkies* and bungalows, police *chowkies*, etc. The *zemindars* of all the villages along the road joined and assisted them

"As the news spread, the country arose; by the time I returned, the whole district was in anarchy. The police and revenue establishments were everywhere ejected, or if permitted to remain, allowed to remain on mere sufferance; the *buniahs* were plundered, new proprietors ejected and murdered, and the king of Delhi proclaimed...From the Seth's house, I used to see the villagers fighting across the river, and as soon as my return was known, the villagers sent to threaten the Seths if they did not eject me; the villagers on both sides of the river were disposed to plunder Muttra and commenced collecting men from Bhurtpore and elsewhere for the purpose...In all these measures (for defending Muttra) I was ably assisted by the Seths; in fact, but for their assistance and that of some other of the wealthier inhabitants, I could not have remained... The outrage committed by the insurgents had been very great; the town of Rayah had been completely plundered; the very houses dug to pieces in search of treasure. The atrocities committed on some of the *buniahs'* wives will not bear repetition The confusion and anarchy of the country exceeded belief; in a circle of a few miles, above five or six *zemindars* had declared themselves independent, assumed the title of *rajah* and proclaimed the king of Delhi. In one instance a single village split into two factions, one-half proclaimed a rajah, the other half the *zemindars*; the impression that the English rule had ceased was universal".

D. *Agra*[69]

The retreat of the British force to the Fort was signalised by the burning of buildings The rebel troops followed it beyond Shahgunj. The march of the insurgent rebel army had been accompanied by hordes of villagers, ready to take advantage of a reverse on

either side, and to plunder the vanquished; they were seen before the battle, by many, to the amount of some thousands, near the European lines. The entry of the British force into the fort was a signal for a general onslaught and plunder. All that night the fires of the blazing bungalows lit the sky.

"On the morning after the battle the town crier, at the order of Morad Alee Kotwal, proclaimed the reign of the King of Delhi, through the city. The armed procession that accompanied the crier was composed of most of the leading Mahomedan Police officers, attached to the Kotwalee, headed by the Kotwal himself, and followed by a crowd of inferior grades and rabble; there is no reason to suppose that a single Mahomedan of any respectability was in any way engaged or accessory to this proceeding.......from the time of the proclamation the property of Christians, wherever they could be found in the city was plundered, and themselves, both man, woman and child, ruthlessly murdered. In these murders the leaders were the Police, who had been, in great numbers, armed with muskets, ammunition and side-arms; these were joined by the Butchers and Mewatees of Wazeerpoorah and other places, and by the low Mahomedan rabble.........The state of the District outside the city was, in one word, anarchy. The repulse of the British troops and the entry into the fort joined to the inaction of the three days, wherever reported, everywhere gave the signal for attacks on the *tehseels* and *thanas*.............The first attacks were made by the Goojurs of the neighbouring villages,.... ... Goojurs had been joined by some of the followers of Deohunse Goojur, *soobah* of the neighbouring state of Dholepoor.......Deohunse then gave up the town of Iradutnugur to plunder. For five weeks carriages laden with the spoils of the plundered villages continually passed along the road to Dholepoor. Proprietors of estates bought at auction were ejected by the former owners. Anarchy prevailed and plunder on all sides..."

E. *Banda*[70]

The insurrection commenced in June before which no actual outbreak or even a dacoitee had taken place in the Banda district. The released convicts from Allahabad and Kanpur, however, soon spread over the country and found the Banda people only too ready to join them. 'The *Tehseelee* of Mow was first attacked and plundered by the *zemindars* of Mow and the neighbouring villages, and the records torn up and distributed to the winds, in order, as they said, that no record of their liabilities might remain to the government. The *Tehseelee* and *Thannah* establishments did their best; but were overwhelmed by thousands, and compelled to seek safety

in flight. The loss of other *Tehseelees* soon followed in a like manner. I saw *Tehseelee* after *Tehseelee* going, and the waves of the rebellion rapidly approaching Banda itself, and was totally helpless to prevent it. The whole district went to the bad in less than a week. The town and bazar of Rajapoor was saved from plunder by the merchants themselves who assembled a large force and repelled the repeated attacks of the surrounding villages.... As for the people, ruined as they were by over-assessment and bad seasons, and half starving, still they would, I think, not have risen in rebellion if they had been left to themselves. It was only when excited by the reports from other districts, and hearing of the excesses committed elsewhere, and of what was then supposed the total massacre of all Europeans at Allahabad, that they too came to the conclusion that the British rule was at an end, and every man had best take care of himself....

'On the same night that the British officers left Banda, all the bungalows in Cantonments were plundered and burnt to the ground and Nawab Ali Bahadoor proclaimed his own rule; and through the government police made arrangements, which saved the town from being plundered. He gave out that the Collector and Magistrate had entrusted the district to his care and desired all Government servants to remain at their posts...... The Adjygurh chiefs, who had been sent by their *ranee* to our assistance, and who had at my request undertaken to protect the jail, joined in releasing the prisoners. Many of the leading *bunyas* of the town were also present on this occasion and sweetmeats were distributed by them to the mutineers. The sepoys then proclaimed their own Raj in opposition to that of Nawab Ali Bahadur issued on the previous night at which they were much incensed. The Nawab, however, managed to appease their wrath by giving them a great dinner of sweetmeats and by acknowledging their authority. They then called the Amlahs and told them they would be maintained in their several appointments; and Mahomed Sidar Khan, the Deputy Collector, was appointed by the sepoys 'Nazim of Banda' with full powers of life and death. The slaughter of cows and bullocks was then forbidden throughout the town. Mr. Cockerell, the Joint Magistrate and a number of East Indians were murdered.'

"In the pergunnahs the news spread like wildfire, and the villagers rose in every direction and plundered and murdered each other promiscuously. Old enmities and the long smothered wish for revenge were forthwith satisfied. Auction purchasers and decree-holders were ousted, travellers and merchandize plundered, and the servants of Government compelled to fly for their lives; and, in all

instances government buildings and property of every description were plundered and destroyed. Everyman's hand was against his neighbour, and the natives revelled in all the license and madness of unchecked anarchy and rebellion in a manner such as only Asiatics can revel in those pleasures. *Tulwars* and matchlocks were scarce in Bundelcund; but armed with spears and scythes, and iron-bound lathies and temporary axes formed by chopping knives fastened on sticks, they imagined themselves to be warriors, chose their own Kings, and defied all comers. Never was revolution more rapid, never more complete"......The sepoys left on the 19th June with their plundered treasures (2 lakhs), guns and ammunition. Pending a reference to Nana about the claims of two rivals—the Nawab and the chieftain of Adjygurh—for the throne of Banda, the former was allowed to take charge of the country. The dispute led to a fight between the two about the middle of August, and again in October. But Nawab Ali Bahadur was not the only ruler of the district. At Kirwi, in the western part, Narayan Rao and Madho Rao declared themselves as Peshwas, both being second to bear these names in that illustrious line. Thus, in the words of a modern historian, who fully relied on the account given above, in Banda, "the revolutionary flame was in full blaze", and "the popular character of the rebellion" was manifested in the "destruction of the church and the desecration of the Christian burial ground."[71]

F. *Hamirpur*[72]

"After the murder of the Europeans, including the Magistrate, anarchy was the order of the day; the mob and sepoys rushed up to the town, plundered everyone they could lay their hands on; old scores were wiped out in blood, and the Christian preacher, Jeremiah, with his whole family were slaughtered unresisting.

"The Bengalee Baboos as writing English were next attacked, and though they begged their lives, lost everything they possessed.. .... There were three boats of unarmed sepoys of the 44th and 67th Regiments, those I believe who were disarmed at Agra, passing by on the 18th June; the guns were turned on them and opened, many were killed, the boats taken and the goods found in them made over to men of the auxiliary chiefs, the sepoys being left to get on their way as best they could. The sepoys and the auxiliaries now fell out about the money in the treasury amounting to a lakh and a half; on July 1, the Peshwa's rule was proclaimed. Once more anarchy prevailed in Hamirpur, the Romeree *Zemindars* levying blackmail on whom they pleased, and committing all kinds of violence; these men with the exception of Thoke Teroze were the

leaders in everything bad, and were well backed up by those of Serowlee Buzoorg and Khoord. The Humeerpore zemindars seem to have behaved decidedly well, but are so weak and poor as to have been able to do little.

"I need scarcely say that the great feature in the rebellion here has been the universal ousting of all bankers, *baniyas*, Marwarees, etc., from landed property in the district, by whatever means they acquired it, whether at auction, by private sale or otherwise, and also that the larger communities have profited immensely by the time of anarchy, while many of the smaller ones have been ruined and dispersed; those who were strong enough to plunder with impunity did so, the others were the victims. This, however, must have been equally the case all over the country; but it is strange that in no instance do the classes so favoured by our rule, the bankers and other traders, appear to have been able to keep their own in the struggle..."

G. *Jhansi*

Jhansi presented a similar scene of anarchy and confusion. The Rani, who is supposed to have led the war of independence, thus describes the condition of the District in a letter to the Commissioner of the Saugor Division:

"The Urzee of the Tahsildars and thanadars of Puchare dated 11th June 1857 states that the Jagirdar of Khuneeadhana of Elaka Jhansee has attacked the district with a hundred matchlockmen and taken possession of the fort of Ahar and the Thakoors of Kuphar etc. have taken forcible possession of the fort Mehraunee and turned away the police sephaees from there, and the same things are going on in other places. No policeman can be got to take service If all the Gurhees are in this manner taken possession of by these people, the district will be ruined; if assistance be rendered some arrangements can be made, otherwise everything must go to ruin

"The Urzee of the Thanadar of Rahpoor Dhala dated 11th June states that it appears that Thakooors of Kyrwa have dismissed the police from the chaukee at the post and the Pawars are marching about in bands The Thakoors of Kyrwa have got together some 200 or 150 men with evil designs towards the inhabitants.

"It has been rumoured that the Thakoor of Chargaon has taken possession of the place and is collecting the revenue of the Parganah and ruining the inhabitants."

The Rani sums up the position by saying that "in all the *elaqas* (i.e. subdivisions) subordinate to Jhansi the chiefs have taken pos-

session of the Gurhees, while others are plundering the country", and that "it is quite beyond her power to make any arrangement for the safety of the district".[73]

H. *Other Areas*

There were outbreaks in Jubbulpore District where 179 rebel leaders appeared in arms.[74] It is unnecessary to describe at length the activities of such local chiefs who established their ephemeral authority over small areas. Some of them assumed royal titles. For example, the fort of Rahatgarh, 24 miles from Sagar, was seized by Fazil Muhammad who assumed the title of Prince of Mandasor.[75] Faizuddin Muktear proclaimed Soal Singh as the Raja of Ajaigarh.[76] Many of them are definitely known to have old scores to pay against the British. The Raja of Banpur, the most prominent of them, who later fought hard against the British, "had many grievances to complain of", and cherished the hope of gaining the entire kingdom of Chanderi, the ancient possession of his ancestors, on the expected fall of the British rule".[77] He at first played a double game, negotiating for terms and territories, but eventually rebelled and seized Chanderi Many other chiefs rose in revolt because they "had lost their *obari* rights in several of their villages", or their estates "had been in whole or in part resumed by the Government".[78] The Rani of Jaitpur, a state annexed by Dalhousie on the Doctrine of Lapse, set herself up as a ruler at Jaitpur, but was driven away by the Chirkaree troops.[79] The Rani of Ramgarh took up arms to get rid of the Court of Wards which managed the State.[80]

I. *General Review*

Although many chiefs in Bundelkhand, Sagar and Narmada territories sooner or later threw in their lot with the rebels, one can hardly accept the statement of Dr. S. B. Chaudhuri that "by the end of August, all places to the north of the Narmada with the exception of the Sadar stations were in flames".[81] Jalaun and Charkhari were unaffected, and the Raja of Panna continued to be the most faithful ally of the British. The same was the case with the ruler of Orchha and Datia, who attacked the Rani of Jhansi and won the support of the British by representing her as a rebel. The Raja of Rewa helped the British with troops, and the whole Baghelkhand remained quiet.

It is equally untrue to say that the "rebellion culminated in the complete subversion of the British power".[82] It would be more appropriate to say that the subversion of the British power by the mutiny of the sepoys culminated in the rebellion of the people as

they thought that "the British raj was over." This, again, is true only in a general way of Rohilkhand and the adjoining area immediately lying to the south of the Yamuna.

So far as Rohilkhand is concerned, the British authority almost disappeared for nearly a year. The whole country presented a scene of plunder and devastation, in which almost everybody's hand was against his neighbour. Khan Bahadur Khan of Bareilly and many other chiefs exercised independent royal authority, fondly believing that the British rule had gone for ever and the Muslim power was going to be revived in all its glory. Nevertheless, wherever there was a vestige of British authority left, large sections of people submitted to it. Referring to Muzaffarnagar where the civil population broke into revolt on May 14, before there was a similar revolt elsewhere, the Magistrate reports: "By the end of August, I collected Rs. 2,95,000 (as revenue) without the sacrifice of a single life (employed in collecting revenue). Later, disturbances occurred in various parts of the district, but the authority was maintained".[83]

Dr Chaudhuri seems to convey the impression that the region north of the Narmada was in flames kindled by the torch of freedom. But what are the actual facts? We have got a fairly good picture of the state of this region in those days, based on authentic testimony. It portrays Indian chiefs fighting against one another, some of them befriending the English for securing the help against rival chiefs, others helping the British at first, then changing, or forced to change, their attitude by the unjust suspicion of the latter, brought out in no small measure by the machinations of their Indian enemies; the petty local chiefs only busy with establishing their own authority and enriching themselves by all unscrupulous means; plunder and murder going on on all sides. This hardly fits in with the romantic picture of Jhansi as the centre of a national war of independence. But such was, in brief, the condition of the whole of North-Western Provinces.

It is a fitting occasion to pause and reflect on the nature of this short spell of independence for which no war had to be waged against the English, and no blood was shed, except that of European and Indian victims of the mutinous sepoys and infuriated populace. In order to understand the nature of the revolt in N.W.P. we must take note of the fact that the class that perhaps contributed most to the wide-spread character of the rebellion was that connected with land. The agrarian system adopted by the British in the Ceded Provinces, as mentioned above, had entirely changed the character of land tenure. In particular, the heavy assessments of

revenue, combined with two innovations introduced in 1833, namely, a complete cadastral survey and large-scale resumption of rent-free grants of lands, proved disastrous to the people.

The result was that the cultivators, already in debt on account of over-assessment prior to 1833, were forced to borrow more money, at heavy rate of interest, from traders, merchants and money-lending classes, who sought to invest their spare cash in land which came to be regarded as a secure and stable form of property. By the new legislation of 1848 it became quite easy for the money-lenders to get decrees in courts and auction the property for non-payment of loans. As a consequence, these wealthy classes got the proprietory rights, while the old cultivators became mere tenants-at-will, and such a change affected nearly one-third of the cultivators The cultivating classes naturally resented the intrusion of these monied classes, mostlv absentees and looked upon the overthrow of British rule in 1857 as a God-sent opportunity to redress their grievances. They not only took advantage of it to reassert their old rights, but wreaked vengeance upon those traders and money-lenders who were at the root of all their sorrows and miseries. This explains not only the wide and rapid spread of the revolt of civil population, but also some of the characteristic features of the rowdyism displayed by the people, namely, destruction of courts and records and the cruelty to the *Mahajans* and *Bunyas*, which were reported from almost every place affected by the outbreak.

In the opinion of a class of historians the rising of civil population invests the outbreak of 1857-8 with the character of a national war of independence. Few of them, however, have made a detailed study of these risings in order to assess their real nature Dr. S. B Chaudhuri is perhaps the onlv exception, and his careful compilation of facts is therefore of special importance. His comments, however, betray a lack of proper understanding of what a popular rising for independence really means. His account of Bijnor serves as a typical example. He stresses the "spontaneous rising of the people", though he admits that it really meant the plunders and other excesses committed by the Gujars, Banjars, etc. as mentioned above. He recognizes that "the independent government of Muhammad Khan, the Nawab of Nazibabad, could not restore law and order; far less stop the bloody wars between the Hindus and the Muhammadans in which the former were eventually defeated with great slaughter at the battle of Haldaur on 18 September". He admits that "the Bijnor rising clearly brought out into prominence the lines of cleavage working to antagonise the two communities". "But,"

he adds, "the rebel cause was strengthened by the participation in it of the noted Gujar Chiefs, ..an outlaw, the Delhi princes and Sirdar Khan."[84]

Dr. Chaudhuri's comment on the general character of the revolt is still more explicit: "The revolt in Rohilkhand was mostly confined to the muslim community who were inflamed by fanaticism to an intense hatred of the English. They raised the green flag, shouted for the revival of the Islamic State and despoiled the hindu bankers and merchants. *But these features did not warp the popular character of the rising*".[85]

It seems to be the view of Dr. Chaudhuri that the hatred of the English is the only factor that counts in a popular national movement, even though the resulting activity was wanton plunder and destruction by the rowdy elements who were hitherto kept in restraint by the English authority and therefore very naturally hated it. The popular character, it seems, is not lost even though the Hindus fight against Muslims, one faction fights against another, and every body's hand is against his neighbours. Even Dr. Chaudhuri's detailed account does not show that the people, while thus engaged, bestowed a moment's thought upon devising measures to maintain the independence they had so miraculously won without any effort on their part, or that any class or group of persons looked upon this independence in any other light than as a means to gain their personal ends. It is therefore difficult to hold that the revolts in N.W. P. deserve the name of popular rising or popular upsurge, as part of a national movement for independence. The spontaneity of the popular risings, on which Dr Chaudhuri lays stress, does not necessarily indicate prolonged and eager expectancy to free the motherland or drive away the English, but may be easily accounted for by the long-standing grievances, mentioned above, of the cultivating class which constituted 90 per cent. of the people, and the godsent opportunity to loot, kill, and burn with impunity, which no Gujar, Banjar, escaped convicts or people of that sort are ever known to have missed. Nor does history record any instance where these classes of people hesitated or waited for a moment when such an opportunity presented itself. Dr. Chaudhuri claims that even apart from these marauding elements there was 'tension among the landed chiefs as well as the people', and the mutiny of sepoys acted like a spark on an ignited substance. This tension was due to various types of discontent, mentioned above, causing disaffection and hatred against the British, but the ignition did not kindle the torch of patriotism and a burning desire for freedom. The so-called popu-

lar upsurge, to start with, was really a scramble for power and plunder, and even the popular cry of 'drive away the English' lost its force and fervour after the first orgy of riots was over. This alone can explain how Syed Ahmad, a Government official, could hold Bijnor for some time on behalf of the British, without any military force, and the District of Moradabad was similarly held by the loyal Nawab of Rampur. Moradabad, in any case, had tasted the bitter cup of freedom. The Hindus, disaffected by the communal policy of the Government, welcomed the return of the British forces. On April 21, Firuz Shah, a prince of the royal House of Delhi, who had cast in his lot with the Rohilkhand rebels, marched upon Moradabad and demanded money and supplies. But the townspeople refused, and Firuz Shah, after making a vain attempt to subdue them, was forced to beat an inglorious retreat.[86]

Another point of interest in the so-called popular upsurge in Rohilkhand is the equal readiness of the people to fight for or against either Khan Bahadur Khan or the British, so long as they were paid for the work. Much is made of the fact that Khan Bahadur Khan had raised an army of forty thousand troops. But as Durgadas Bandyopadhyaya, who was present in Bareilly at the time, observes, these recruits, mostly poor men, were attracted by payment alone; the common folk had no enthusiasm for any party or cause, and thousands joined the British army for exactly the same reason.[86a]

It is true that many landlords joined the revolt, but many also remained loyal and faithful to the British till the last As regards the common people the contemporary British writers themselves admit that a large section of them in N.W.P. showed friendly feelings to the British. As an evidence thereof it is pointed out that otherwise supplies could not be obtained, and small groups of Englishmen could not move through Rohilkhand without any escort and hold important posts "amidst the swarms of mutineers passing up the Grand Trunk Road to Delhi".[87] If there are instances where the Englishmen were cruelly butchered, there are perhaps more numerous examples where English fugitives—men, women, and children—owed their lives to the kindness and sympathy of the Indians, both chiefs and common people. All this does not necessarily mean that these were loyal to the British; they might have been passive or indifferent, even though disaffected towards the British. But the existence of a large element of such people certainly takes away from the universal character of the 'popular rising' which has been claimed by some writers.

IV. AWADH (AVADH)

Mention has been made above of the grave discontent caused by the annexation of Awadh among all classes of people. Apart from the general discontent that inevitably followed all such annexations, the popular discontent was aggravated by the subsequent incidents, such as the spoliation of the Nawab's palace; the lack of timely help which reduced the members of the royal family to utter penury, even to the miserable condition of begging for food; the new policy of land-settlement which deprived the Talukdars of their property; the imposition of new and obnoxious duties such as those on stamps, petitions, food, houses, eatables, ferries and opium which laid a heavy burden on the common people,—mostly peasants who were already suffering from heavy assessment of land-revenue.[88] These were quite recent happenings, hardly a year old, and the people still remembered how the outlying portions of Awadh, then constituting the North-Western Provinces of the British, were forcibly taken away by them. No wonder that the people of Awadh—meaning the original kingdom—who fully shared the general discontent and grave apprehension of loss of religion would grow specially restive. In Awadh, again, the sepoys were mostly recruited from the people and there was no hard and fast line of demarcation between the two as in other parts of India. It is no wonder, therefore, that the sepoys, as well as other classes of people, would grow more excited than elsewhere, and the civil population would show more sympathy to the mutinous sepoys who were mostly their own kith and kin Events proved this to be the case. Nowhere else, outside the old Suba or kingdom of Awadh, were the mutinies of sepoys so successful and wide-spread, and, what is more important, led to outbreaks of civil population on such a large scale. It is only against this background that the civil rebellion in Awadh can be understood in its true perspective

Reference has been made above to the mutiny of the sepoys at Lakhnau on May 3, which was easily suppressed. The news of Mirat and Delhi reached there on May 14 and 15. On the night of May 30, there was another rising in course of which the Brigadier was shot and the officers' bungalows were burnt. But nearly five to six hundred men of the three native regiments remained loyal, and next morning Sir Henry Lawrence, who had been given plenary power in Awadh, had no difficulty in dispersing the mutineers who all fled after a few discharges from his guns and marched to Delhi. The same afternoon (May 31) about five or six thousand Muslims raised the standard of the Prophet and attempted a rising of the civil population, but the police put them down.

During the month of May the province of Awadh had remained comparatively quiet and, unlike Rohilkhand, British administration was regularly carried on throughout the province. But after the mutiny at Lakhnau on May 30/31 mutiny became general throughout the province. This was evidently due, partly to the example of Lakhnau, and partly to the constant stream of mutineers pouring into Awadh from outside. But whatever may be the cause, "every detachment without exception threw off control". "In every instance the mutiny of a regiment was followed by the loss of the district to which it belonged". In the course of ten or eleven days, English administration in Awadh had vanished like a dream, and not a single representative of the British Government was to be found at any of the stations in Awadh. It is, however, a singular fact that the common people as well as the Talukdars, with a few exceptions, treated the fugitive Europeans with genuine sympathy and kindness.[89]

The political vacuum thus created led to a situation not much dissimilar to what took place in Rohilkhand. But there were some special features. The Talukdars of Awadh, who had lost their lands by the new system of land tenure, immediately rose as a class and resumed the lands, which had been taken away from them, by forcibly ejecting their new masters who had purchased them at auction sale. The Talukdars had not only powerful motive but also a strong incentive to revolt by the strength and security of their position. Their numbers were great and they had a common cause to fight for. They were well armed and almost every Talukdar had a fort surrounded by dense jungles. It has been estimated that in course of the suppression of the outbreak, "1572 forts had been destroyed and 714 cannon, exclusive of those taken in action, surrendered".[90]

Although the common people had not the same grievances as the Talukdars, all classes of people joined in the fray for reasons mentioned above. Even the cultivators, who were protected by the British against the rapacity of the Talukdars, joined their old masters who were their natural chiefs, and with whom they had a special tie.

The rebellion in Awadh had another advantage over that in Rohilkhand. It had a rallying point in the Nawab family which was dispossessed of its domains only a year back. The last Nawab was practically a prisoner in Calcutta, but his cause was upheld by his queen, Begam Hazrat Mahal. Her minor son, Birjis Quadr, was selected as Nawab on 7 July and his coronation in Lakhnau was accompanied by booming of guns. A regular administration was set

up with Sharf-ud-Daulah as Prime Minister and the important offices were judiciously distributed among the Hindus and Muslims The chief authority was however wielded by Begam Hazrat Mahal.

It should not be supposed, however, that the whole of Awadh rallied round the authority of the Begam. As in Rohilkhand, so in Awadh, a number of local chiefs set up tiny independent kingdoms, some of which were contested by more than one rival claimant. Almost the whole of Awadh and bordering regions were parcelled out among the Talukdars and other chiefs, many of whom possessed one or more well-fortified strongholds and a large number of troops. Among these may be mentioned Muhammad Hasan of Gorakhpur, Mehndi Hasan of Sultanpur, Beni Madho Baksh of Sankarpur, Narpat Singh of Ruya, Udit Narayan and Madhu Pershad of Birhur, Devi Bux Singh and the three Singh Zamindars of Dhurua.[90a]

As the first-mentioned has recently obtained celebrity as a great patriot and national hero, his career may be traced in some detail. Mir Muhammad Hasan served as a Nazim of Gonda under the Nawab of Awadh. Like many other Zamindars of Awadh, he did not at first join the revolt and gave shelter to Colonel Lennox and his family. When disturbances broke out in Gorakhpur, the local authorities tried to set up a committee of local Zamindars to administer the district, but the scheme failed as there were dissensions among the local chiefs The Government practically ceased to function and there were chaos and confusion everywhere.

"The northern and western *pergunnahs* were at this time (end of June) utterly disorganised The Gyoutum Rajpoots, under the instigation, and sometimes under the personal command, of the Raja of Nuggur, everywhere rose and dispossessed the present proprietors of all the lands tradition assigned to their race Most of the Amorha *zemindars* openly defied the Government officials, and proclaimed that our rule had given place to the '*Nawabee*', while the Rajpoots of Pynah and the neighbouring villages, by their piracies, closed the navigation of the Gogra At the same time it was known that frequent meetings were being held by the Rajahs of Nurhurpore, Nuggur, Sutassee and the *Baboos* of Panderpar and others, in which it had been decided to obtain assistance from Oudh."

In the meantime Hasan had joined the rebels and first appeared at the head of a rebel party on 12 July. He was however defeated by the British forces on the 18th. On 20 July he arrived at the bank of the Rapti, opposite to the city of Gorakhpur He was welcomed by the leading Muslim inhabitants of Gorakhpur and easily made himself master of it. "His first act after the assumption of power was to order all Government employees to enter his services on

pain of punishment. None of the Deputy Collectors and only one *Tehseeldar* obeyed, but several *thanadars* accepted him as their master. He maintained the existing fiscal and criminal jurisdictions to the great disgust of many of his partisans among the landholders, who objected that *thanadars* were unknown under the *Nawabee* as the district had become.......The records were preserved. From these documents, and the *cannongoes* who mostly joined him, he obtained full information of the demand due from each landholder.. .....The great proprietors who early made their submission to him in person received dresses of honour, salutes of guns and were permitted to exercise full civil and criminal authority within the limits of their respective estates, or what they claimed as such, for obsolete titles were revived. In return they furnished contingents to his army. The chief among these were the *rajahs* of Suttasee, Nuggur, Nurhurpore, Burhyapore, Nichloul, Shahpore, the baboos of Tegra Pandepar, Khudowlee. The wealthy Mahomedan families of the town naturally were among the first to welcome him and from them his officials were mostly selected. There was a judge, a collector, and *naib nazim*, Mooshurruf Khan, who perhaps enjoyed more real powers than Mahomed Hussun himself . .Large sums of money were extorted by violence or threats of it from the merchants and bankers of the city, and the female members of many families were dishonoured by his lawless and licentious soldiery. In the district, those who had lost their estates through the agency of the civil courts, now ousted the purchasers and reentered in possession; great search was also made for deeds and decrees The strong preyed everywhere on the weak".[91]

It is unnecessary to describe in detail the risings in different parts of Awadh which followed the pattern of Rohilkhand. For henceforth the chief interest of the rebellion in Awadh is centred round Lakhnau, the capital city of the late Nawabs, the British, and the rebel government of Birjis Quadr; as it was only in that city that the remnants of the representatives of the British Government were concentrated in the Residency building besieged by the mutineers. It is therefore necessary to trace the origin and history of the memorable siege of Lakhnau which, along with Delhi and Kanpur, formed the chief strongholds of the rebellion of 1857-8.

As mentioned above, the mutiny of the sepoys at Lakhnau on May 30 and 31 set ablaze the whole of Awadh; yet, strangely enough, the British authority in Lakhnau remained undisturbed and intact for some time. But Sir Henry Lawrence was fully alive to the impending danger. The first step he took was to set up two strongly fortified centres in the city, where all the forces would be concen-

trated. These were the Machchhi Bhavan, a large fortified palace situated on a natural eminence, and his own residence, known as the Residency. Later, he selected the Residency, on the bank of the Gumti river, as the place of refuge for all Europeans. It consisted of a number of detached dwelling houses and other buildings, of which the Residency itself was the most conspicuous, the whole area being defended only by rude mud walls and trenches. He took measures to improve the defences and erected batteries along the line of entrenchment.

He was soon to face a delicate problem. As noted above, several Indian regiments helped the authorities to suppress the mutiny of May 30-31. One party, headed by Mr. Gubbins, the Financial Commissioner, regarded even the loyal sepoys as a potential danger and wanted to disarm them, but Lawrence disagreed. Taking advantage of the latter's illness Gubbins managed to carry his point, and all the sepoys except about 350 were ordered to go home; but as soon as Lawrence heard this he sent messengers to recall the sepoys, about 150 of whom returned. Lawrence also invited the pensioned sepoys to rally round their old flag. All these sepoys remained faithful till the last and played an important part in saving the Residency. Lawrence had asked for, and obtained the command of the army. Meanwhile there were disquieting reports from all parts of the province, and even Lakhnau did not remain unscathed. The military police revolted on June 11-12, and joined the mutineers in the districts. Nevertheless, Lawrence, though in shattered health, worked unceasingly for strengthening the defence of the Residency and Machchhi Bhaban and collecting stores. His defensive policy was not liked by many who wanted to march out and attack the rebels. Here, again, it was Gubbins who led the dissentient section, and at last lawrence yielded

On June 29, 1857, a large body of rebel army was reported to be advancing towards Lakhnau. Lawrence started the next morning and met them at Chinhat, about ten miles to the north-east of the city. After an artillery duel, the mutineers, advancing with a steadiness that extorted the admiration of the British officers, were already threatening to outflank their handful of opponents, when the desertion of some of Lawrence's native gunners, and the flight of his native cavalry decided the fortune of the day. Lawrence gave order to retreat and "the retreat soon became a rout." The mutineers blocked the way to Lakhnau by occupying a bridge over a small rivulet. But a small squadron of British volunteers, with sabres flashing, hurled themselves upon the dense masses, and the sepoys broke and fled.[92]

The remnants of the British army reached the Residency, but the rebel force followed in their wake and invested it the same afternoon (June 30). Thus began that memorable siege which is perhaps the most amazing episode in the whole military history of the Mutiny. It is difficult to conceive of a more unequal contest. A small force of British soldiers and civilians and loyal sepoys, altogether numbering less than 1,700, burdened with a number of women and children, had to defend themselves in ordinary buildings with mud walls, protected by hastily improvised defences, against six thousand trained soldiers, who were soon reinforced by a constantly increasing number of Talukdars and their retainers, till their number reached one hundred thousand or perhaps even more. Lakhnau and Kanpur were the only two theatres of war where the mutineers or the revolutionaries took the offensive and the British had to defend themselves against enormous odds. As such both require careful consideration.

The besieging sepoys at Lakhnau were inspired by the presence of the Begam of Awadh and Maulavi Ahmadulla who were the leading spirits in the resistance against the British; yet, to the astonishment alike of friends and foes, the tiny garrison held out for nearly three months till relief came on September 25. At first the sepoys confined themselves to cannonading from a distance and a galling musketry fire from the neighbouring buildings, causing nearly fifteen to twenty deaths every day during the first week. One of the victims was Henry Lawrence himself, who was wounded by the bursting of a shell on July 2 and died two days later. Unable to create much effect upon the defenders by mere cannonading and musketry fires, the besiegers made a general assault on July 20; but although they reached the walls and some of them displayed great feats of courage, the attack was repulsed with heavy loss after four hours' desperate fighting. The general assault was repeated on August 10, August 18, and September 5, but always with the same result. The siege continued, and its further course will be related later.[93] It will suffice here to state that while the rebels could not capture the Residency at Lakhnau, several British expeditions also failed to dislodge them, and Lakhnau was not re-occupied by the British till the beginning of March, 1858.

During the prolonged siege of Lakhnau the mutinous sepoys and the rebel leaders had a splendid opportunity to combine their resources and put up an organized fight against the British, if any such were intended. But there was no regular plan of campaign, not even any serious attempt to prevent the relieving army from Calcutta to reach Lakhnau, Kanpur, and adjoining regions. More

than a hundred thousand men, many of them well-trained and well-equipped soldiers, were engaged for eight months in a single military operation against less than two thousand men behind a hastily improvised defence, and failed miserably to dislodge them. These were the eight crucial months in course of which the fate of the Mutiny and Civil rebellion was decided. Taking a long view of things, it must be said that the futile siege of Lakhnau, in spite of the terrible misery and hardships it inflicted upon the besieged, was a godsend to save the British empire, inasmuch as it kept back a hundred thousand of the rebel fighters from participating in actions which decided the fate of the rebellion.

The siege of Lakhnau is also a crucial test of the nature of the revolt in Awadh The banner of the defunct kingdom of Awadh was unfurled again after a year, and if there were a genuine spirit or a real mass movement to fight for the King and the Country (even taking it in the narrow sense of Awadh rather than India), one would expect a ready response from the hundreds of chiefs who set up baronial principalities all over the province Lakhnau was the focal point of the fight for freedom and Begam Hazrat Mahal was a brave and resourceful leader, not unworthy of the cause. Nothing is more natural than that the chiefs of Awadh should rally round her flag and place their entire energy and resources at her disposal without a moment's hesitation. The general truth of this is admitted by all classes of writers, even though they hold different views about the nature of the outbreak. Thus Dr. S. B. Chaudhuri, to whom reference has been made above, writes: "The rising at Lucknow was the central event of the rebellion in the mutinies. Both in dimension and character it embodied the revolutionary urges of the time". Proceeding further he says: "The operations at Lucknow took the form of a great war of liberation. It marked the climax of India's struggle against Britain *a guerre a la mort*".[34]

But what were the actual facts? The most crucial point in deciding this question is the behaviour of the chiefs and *Talukdars*. As there are sharp differences of opinion on this issue, specimens of different types of views may be quoted: Innes is definitely of opinion that only a very few Talukdars joined in the attack of the Residency before Havelock's withdrawal in the early part of August, and that even on the 10th of the month, the mass of the Talukdars was holding aloof. Later on, their retainers joined in the attack on the Residency on September 5, but as a body, they had not even then taken any active part in the siege or shown hostility to the British. Holmes, agreeing with Innes, comments as follows on the

second unsuccessful attempt of Havelock to relieve Lakhnau, on August 12.

"The retreat had a serious political effect. The talukdars of Oudh, with few exceptions, had hitherto remained passive, watching events. One of their number, Man Singh, who played a double game with great craft throughout the struggle, had advised them to have nothing to do with the mutineers. But when Havelock withdrew from the province, they felt that the British Government was doomed; and some of them wrote to inform the authorities at Benaras that they had no choice but to send their retainers to join in the siege of the Residency".[95] Elsewhere, Holmes mentions that even at the beginning of the siege there were "a large number of talukdars' retainers".[96]

The views of Innes, supported by Holmes, have been bitterly criticised by Dr. S. B. Chaudhuri. But it seems he has not succeeded in rebutting the arguments advanced by Holmes in support of Innes and demolishing the conclusion of Holmes that there is no positive evidence that before the issue of Canning's Proclamation (March, 1858) any Talukdar took the field *in person*, except Man Singh, the three Talukdars who fought against the British at Chinhat (30 June) and four others, mentioned by Gubbins.[97]

Dr. Chaudhuri says: "That the talukdars, with a few exceptions, actively aided and abetted the mutineers during nearly the whole of the struggle stands confirmed by authentic evidence".[98] The nature of this evidence may be examined a little more closely. The first is a report, dated June 12, by Henry Lawrence that the Talukdars had been arming themselves. This is a vague statement and may be easily explained by their forcible seizure of lands belonging to others and a natural desire to retain them. The second is a statement of Lieutenant Crump who served under Havelock in his Awadh campaign, that before August 5, the English had to contend against a few Talukdars who were on the side of the mutineers. The actual words used by Crump are: "Before (August 5) we had only a few wrong-headed zemindars to contend with, on the side of the mutineers—now, the whole population is against us". By "the whole population" he evidently meant the population along the line of march. Dr. Chaudhuri misses the real import of this statement, namely, that the Talukdars (if 'Zamindars' referred to them) and general people were indifferent to the fate of Lakhnau until the month of August. This is rendered more explicit by another statement of Crump, namely that "the great landed proprietors......have, up to the present time,"—the first week in August —"been perfectly still, standing at gaze". Dr. Chaudhuri does not

quote this, nor the relevant statement of Outram on September 17, 1857, that his information shows that "there is a large and influential class in Oude........among the more powerful, and most of the middle classes of chiefs and zemindars, who really desire the re-establishment of our rule; while others, well disposed towards us, have only been induced to turn against us because they believe that our Raj is gone". On the other hand, Dr. Chaudhuri makes much of the statements of Outram on March 8 and 30, 1858, to the effect that there "are not a dozen land holders who have not themselves borne arms", and that 'there are few Talukdars who have not taken an active part in the rebellion.' Outram did not make it clear at what stage the Talukdars actively fought against the British. In any case Outram's statement as well as the one made by his successor Montgomery, to the effect, that between June and November, 1857, with "a few honourable exceptions the whole province of Oude was in arms against the British Government" does not support Dr. Chaudhuri's contention "that the talukdars with a few exceptions actively aided the mutineers *during nearly the whole of the struggle*. Nor is this contention supported by the few specific facts mentioned by Dr. Chaudhuri, as they all refer to the resistance to Havelock, in August and September, and a confidential official report from Lakhnau in October, that Man Singh and four others were fighting against the English at Lakhnau.[99]

If, even the most minute investigations of Dr. Chaudhuri have failed to elicit more positive evidence than what he has collected in a special appendix and has been discussed above, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the Talukdars, with a few exceptions, did not join the revolt and rally round the flag of Begam Hazrat Mahal *at the beginning of the struggle*. The majority included those who, *at a later date*, joined the rebellion, a few of whom swore to fight for their country till the last.

Dr. Chaudhuri has referred to Man Singh as one of the Talukdars taking a prominent part in the rebellion, and his being elected leader by the sepoys of Fyzabad on June 10 in preference to the Fyzabad Maulvi who was deposed from the leadership after two days.[100] Fortunately, a few positive facts are known about him on unimpeachable authority. Henry Lawrence had appealed to the Talukdars for support before the outbreak, and Raja Man Singh of Shahgunj, one of the most powerful and influential among them, had promised his loyal support to the British[101] and gave shelter to fugitive British women and children in his fort.[102] In July he addressed a circular letter to the other Talukdars urging them to support the British.[103] According to Gubbins, he sent his brother

on a mission to Nana and at the same time carried on correspondence with the British.[104] Early in September he encamped with a large army near Lakhnau, but did not take any part in the siege. He was still negotiating with the British, and the besieged at Lakhnau did not know whether he was a friend or foe. Dr. Sen observes: "His presence, therefore, was a source of anxiety as well as hope. If he chose to join the rebels the handful of Englishmen and Indians in the Residency would be simply crushed by overwhelming numbers. On the other hand, if he decided to help them the garrison could reasonably expect to hold their own and beat back the enemy".[105] But Man Singh did not definitely commit himself to either party though he professed allegiance to the English; he evidently desired to be on good terms with both the belligerents until, at least, he could be more sure about the possible result. After the failure of Havelock to relieve Lakhnau, Man Singh joined the mutineers, probably because he though that theirs was the winning cause. In September and October, 1857, he was fighting against the English; in February, 1858, he remained entirely neutral; and in July he actively joined the British. Lieut. Majendie justly observes that "it is very difficult to specify the number of occasions when Man Singh changed sides".[106]

Man Singh and his brother Ramdin Singh, who followed his example, may be regarded as typical of the Talukdar class as a whole, so far as their mentality, if not activity, is concerned. Most of them had been stirred up to action by the withdrawal of the British officers, and made haste to recover the lands they had lost. Then they played a waiting game, looking for the winning horse. A few of them backed the right horse, but most backed the wrong one.[107] The second retreat of Havelock in August seemed to them to be decisive, and many of them, *now for the first time*, sent their levies to Lakhnau. Whether they were at first really as friendly and loyal to the British, as Innes supposed, may be doubted, but they certainly were not actuated by any special love for, or allegiance to their country or its defunct royal house. There were a few exceptions, here and there, but there is no evidence that their number was large. Reference may be made to some of them in order to give the other side of the picture. Hanumant Singh of Dharupur gave shelter to the British fugitives from Salone in his fort. When Captain Barrow, Deputy Commissioner of Salone, on the eve of his departure a fortnight later, expressed a hope that the Raja would help the British in suppressing rebellion, he replied: "Sahib, your countrymen came into this country and drove out our king. You sent your officers round the districts to examine the

titles to the estates. At one blow you took from me lands which from time immemorial had been in my family. I submitted. Suddenly misfortune fell upon you. The people of the land rose against you. You came to me whom you had despoiled. I have saved you. But now,—now I march at the head of my retainers to Lakhnau to try and drive you from the country".[108] "The true-hearted Rajput, however, did not fight his new masters".[109]

Hanumant Singh was dispossessed of the greater part of his property and he had a sore grievance against the British. Rana Beni Madho of Sankarpore, who lost 119 out of 223 villages, also said that he fought against the English for his country, but it is not difficult to imagine where his real grievance lay. Muhammad Hasan was the Nazim of Gonda under the Nawab of Awadh. But, as mentioned above,[110] he established himself as Nazim of Gorakhpur. He also established his influence at Basti, the neighbouring district, though his authority was challenged both by the Raja of Bansi and the Rani of Basti.[111] He did not come into prominence in the early phases of the revolt, but held out against the British till the end. What invests his revolt with importance is the sentiment he expressed in November, 1858, when asked by a friend to submit and take advantage of the Queen's Proclamation. His reply is an interesting one. On the one hand he points out that the "phraseology of the proclamation where it promises pardon of offences is somewhat obscure and indefinite", implying that he would have submitted if he were sure of pardon On the other hand, he says that he regards himself as a servant of the King of Awadh and would rather die "fighting for my religion and earthly sovereign."[112]

Hanumant Singh, Beni Madho and Muhammad Hasan represent a new class who, in addition to recovery of their landed properties and preservation of religion, also include allegiance to the king of Awadh among the motives which impelled them to fight. But it is interesting to note that none of these three, though powerful and valorous, did rally round the Begam Hazrat Mahal, and unreservedly placed his resources at her disposal. None of them played any important part in the life-and-death struggle before Lakhnau which was to determine the fate of the revolt.[113] The position of this centre of rebellion, even so late as the end of December, was very frankly put by the Begam.

"...In a meeting of all the chiefs, held on 22 December, she severely harangued the leaders and denounced them for their indifference. She is reported to have said: Great things were promised from the all-powerful Delhi, and my heart used to be gladden-

ed by the communications I used to receive from that city, but soon the king has been dispossessed and his army scattered. The English have bought over the Sikhs and Rajas,........and communications are cut off. The Nana has been vanquished, Lucknow is endangered —what is to be done? The whole army is in Lucknow, but it is without courage. Why does it not attack Alumbaugh? Is it waiting for the English to be reinforced and Lucknow to be surrounded? How much longer am I to pay the sepoys for doing nothing? Answer me now, and if fight you won't, I shall negotiate with the English to spare my life.

The chiefs answered: Fear not, we shall fight, for if we do not, we shall be hanged one by one, we have that fear before our eyes. The party swore to stick by one another and then dispersed".[114]

If this contemporary account may be taken to be substantially correct, it must be regarded as of great importance. The laconic reply of the chiefs throws welcome light on the psychology of the rebel chiefs. They were at first content with the limited objectives of recovering their lost lands, establishing local authority, and achieving similar other selfish ends. It was only in the last phase, when faced with the imminent danger of gallows, that they awoke to a sense of responsibility to fight the English with their might. The reference to the payment of sepoys is also an interesting revelation.

Throughout his work Dr. S. B. Chaudhuri has waxed eloquent over the great war of liberation in Awadh, calling forth fervent activities of the chiefs and people. It is significant, however, that the most important of these activities referred to by him were, ejecting the auction-purchasers, resuming the lost lands, and establishing the personal rule within a prescribed limit. Dr. Chaudhuri often refers to their throwing off the British yoke. But this was already achieved by the mutiny of the sepoys, and required no efforts on their part. So the detailed account of the activities of the numerous chiefs in Awadh and neighbouring regions which fills the pages of Dr. Chaudhuri's book does not really give an impression of a great war of liberation from the British yoke.

It is true that many influential landlords joined the revolt and when, after reaping a rich harvest, they were brought to bay by the returning—and avenging—English force, gave a good account of themselves. The fight they fought, be it remembered, was for *retaining* the wealth and privileges which they had unlawfully secured, and not for gaining freedom for the whole or part of India. When the day of reckoning came many of them fought till the last ditch and showed skill, heroism and courage, which extort our un-

stinted admiration. In that hour of trial, they gave a dignity to their action by invoking high principles in support of their conduct. A few of them, but very few, even openly professed to fight for their king and country, but there is no evidence that even a year back[115] they cared much for either the one or the other.

V. OTHER PARTS OF INDIA

The mutiny of the sepoys outside the areas discussed above did not lead to the revolt of the civil people on a large scale, except in a small part of Bihar, particularly the Shahabad district and the Santal Parganas, Bundelkhand and the Sagar and Narmada Districts, and the eastern fringe of the Panjāb. These formed an outer circle to Awadh and Rohilkhand which constituted the central zone of the civil rebellion.

A. *Bihar*

The Rajput Kunwar Singh, an old man of seventy or more,[116] played a leading part in the outbreak of 1857, and as such a correct knowledge of his antecedents and motives is of great importance. He had extensive landed estates, but they were heavily encumbered. He was a friend of the British officials, and with their help petitioned to the Board of Revenue to take up the management of his estates. This proposal, strongly recommended by two successive Commissioners of Patna, was at the last moment turned down in 1857 and Kunwar Singh found himself on the brink of bankruptcy.

According to the testimony of Tayler, the Commissioner of Patna, Kunwar Singh was all along a friend of the British, but "was afterwards driven into rebellion by the short-sightedness of the Bengal Government." Kaye, Holmes, and Dr. Sen, the eminent historians of the Mutiny, also agree with this view.[117] But recently an attempt has been made to prove that Kunwar Singh had "been meditating on a plan to assail British authority at least for some time on the eve of the outbreak of this movement (Mutiny of 1857) if not all along from 1845"[118] The only evidence that Kunwar Singh meditated rebellion as far back as 1845, is a statement by J. J. Hall that the former was suspected of being involved in the anti-British plot of 1846 at Patna. William Tayler, Commissioner of the Patna Division till August, 1857, knew all the details about it and regarded this plot as a part of a general conspiracy to destroy the English authority. He was accused, very justly, of indiscriminate arrest of Indians on mere suspicion of rebellious activities. Yet, as mentioned above, Tayler had full confidence in the loyalty and friendship of Kunwar Singh till the last. The mere suspicion of Hall cannot weigh against this evidence.

Similarly, the view that Kunwar Singh was preparing for the revolt for a long time, and even organized the mutiny of sepoys at Danapur, rests upon suspicions only and no positive evidence. Reference has been made to the reports published in the *Englishman*, a Calcutta daily.[119] No more importance attaches to these than the reports made by "trustworthy agents" to various British officials to the effect that Kunwar Singh "had enjoined upon his ryots to be ready when called", "had written to two of the largest Zamindars of the Gaya district", "was collecting arms and men", "had been selected by the Danapur sepoys as their Raja", and "supplied boats to them to cross the river Son", and so on.[120] It is interesting to note that such reports, not only against Kunwar Singh but against many other Zamindars of Bihar, reached Tayler, but he attached no credit to them.[121] The fact that Kunwar Singh did actually revolt, is held out as convincing evidence of the truth of these reports. But it is conveniently forgotten that reports against the rest proved to be untrue Much has been made of the report of Mr. Wake which runs as follows:

"I know that there is an idea prevalent that Kooer Singh's treason was not premeditated, but I am certain that for three months at least he was only biding his time. There is or ought to be in the commissioner's office an anonymous petition, from a man who would not come forward by me to Mr. Tayler, the late Commissioner, detailing the whole of the Baboo's plans and preparations and even the date (the 25th July) on which the Dinapur Regiments would mutiny. This was forwarded by me I think a week before the meetings and every word in it proved true."[122] This report was written on 29 January, 1858, when Kunwar Singh had proved to be a formidable leader of the revolt. But the same Mr. Wake wrote a letter to the Government on July 19, 1857, in which he makes the following observation on Kunwar Singh:

"He is nominally the owner of vast estates, whilst in reality he is a ruined man, and can hardly find money to pay the interest of his debts. As long, therefore, as law and order exist, his position cannot improve: take them away, and he well knows that he would become supreme in his district. I do not think he will ever openly oppose the Government as long as he thinks that Government will stand, but I do think that, should these districts be ever the scene of a serious outbreak, he may take it into his head that it is time to strike a blow for his own interests, and his feudal influence is such as to render him exceedingly dangerous in such an event".[123]

It is to be noted that on the day he wrote this letter, Wake was in possession of the "anonymous petition" on which he later

laid so much stress. Evidently he did not put much faith on it then. It is on record that on the basis of this petition the Government searched the house of Kunwar's Arrah agent, Kaliprasad, but no incriminatory evidence was found.[124] Mr. Wake conveniently forgot this when he wrote the report on 29 January.

An important evidence which ought to weigh most in arriving at a right conclusion about Kunwar Singh is generally ignored[125] and therefore deserves mention in some detail. On receiving various adverse reports against Kunwar Singh, Tayler asked him to come to Patna, but he excused himself on the ground of illness. This is regarded as an evidence that he had already been meditating rebellion and therefore "tactfully avoided it". But what is generally ignored is that Tayler, *at the same time,* instituted confidential enquiry about Kunwar Singh.

"On 19 July Syed Azimuddin Hussain, the deputy-collector of Arrah, was at the same time directed to scrutinise everything connected with and about Kunwar Singh and to submit a confidential report regarding it to the commissioner. Azimuddin visited him, and found him lying on bed. He pleaded extreme sickness, and added that being old and infirm he was unable to take the journey to Patna at that stage". Azimuddin's report was favourable to Kunwar Singh. "I could elicit nothing", he says, "by secret enquiry which might warrant the conclusion that Kunwar was making secret preparations for a revolt. Nor was there any reason to suppose that his people were particularly disaffected". All that he could find was that "should he raise the standard of revolt his people would follow him". He exculpated Kunwar Singh on the ground that he made payments to his creditors in the months of May and June and did not lay by supplies of war. Azimuddin could not believe that a man who was penniless could afford to make preparations to go to war. Some persons questioned the bonafides of Azimuddin, but it should be remembered that he "gave proofs of rare fidelity to the British and was one of the besieged in the fort".[126]

On the whole, it is impossible to hold, on the basis of available evidence, that Kunwar Singh's action was a premeditated one, far less that he organized the rebellion as a war of independence, or joined the mutinous sepoys in order to liberate the motherland. The most reasonable view of his conduct is that contained in Mr. Wake's letter of July 19, quoted above. This is further supported by the statement of Nishan Singh, an able lieutenant of Kunwar Singh, who attended his leader throughout his campaign. He was at Arrah when the mutinous sepoys from Danapur reached that town. What followed is thus described by him:

"Meanwhile the rebellious sepoys of Dinapore reached Arrah and looted the town. And they threatened the servants of Kunwar Singh to bring him there or they would loot Jagdishpore (i.e. the native place of Kunwar Singh). This threat was not made in my presence and I state it according to what I have heard. Accordingly Kunwar Singh came from Jagdishpore to Arrah on the very day the sepoys had arrived at Arrah i.e. 18th Savan".[127]

Arrah was situated twenty-five miles west of Danapur. Tayler had warned the European residents and sent fifty of Rattray's Sikhs to help them They had put the house of Boyle in a state of defence. As soon as the news reached Arrah that the mutinous sepoys had crossed the Son river, the fifteen European and Eurasians, the Deputy-Collector Azimuddin, mentioned above, and the fifty Sikhs took shelter in Boyle's house.[128]

On July 27 the Danapur mutineers reached Arrah and, as usual, looted the treasury and almost every bungalow, released the prisoners and burnt the civil court and many other houses. Then they attacked Boyle's house, under the leadership of Kunwar Singh who joined them on the same day, as mentioned above. But the small besieged garrison kept up a sharp fire and forced the mutineers to retreat. The brave Sikhs stood solidly behind the European besieged, and were not moved either by an appeal to their religious and racial sentiments or by the tempting offer of Rs. 500 each as a price of desertion.

On the 29th a detachment under Captain Dunbar, sent from Patna for the relief of the garrison at Arrah, was attacked at night when it was entering the suburbs of Arrah, and forced to retreat with heavy loss. Kunwar Singh now proclaimed himself the ruler of the country and set up his own machinery of administration. But it was shortlived. Arrah was relieved, on August 3, by Vincent Eyre,[129] an artillery officer who was proceeding by river from Calcutta to Allahabad. With the help of some troops from Buxar he advanced towards Arrah, and was opposed by Kunwar Singh. But Eyre defeated his force at Gujrajgunj, close to Arrah, and not only relieved the garrison at Arrah, but also sacked Jagdishpur, the residential village of Kunwar Singh, after again defeating him on August 12. After this disaster Kunwar Singh proceeded with the sepoys and his own retainers towards Sasaram in the south.

In the meantime the rebellious spirit affected the civil population in Shahabad as in Rohilkhand and Awadh. The administrative machinery set up by Kunwar Singh must have collapsed after his defeat and flight. But sporadic acts of rebellion continued on a wide scale. It was estimated that seven to ten thousand men were involved—

mostly "the war-like population of the Rajput villages headed by brave chieftains".

"The basic feature of the rebellion in Shahabad", says Dr. Chaudhuri, "is reflected in the wholesale destruction of European property effected by the rebels". In particular, quite a large number of indigo factories were destroyed. This shows that the "nature of the upsurge in Shahabad" did not materially differ from that in Rohilkhand, described above. The rebellion was stiffened by the threat of "wholesale burning and destruction of all villages" by the Magistrate.[130]

There was a similar upsurge in the Gaya district, in which several local leaders followed in the footsteps of those of Rohilkhand. Hyder Ali Khan of Rajgir Pargana "collected a large body of men, proclaimed himself Raja and drove away all Government servants". Judhar Singh of Arwal also played a similar part. "He set up his own rule making grants of land and even whole villages to his followers". Fourteen villages in Wazirgunj, 14 miles to the east of Gaya, raised the flag of independence under Kusal Singh, a *ticadar* of many villages. Other local leaders also proclaimed the fall of the "English raj" and prevailed upon the shop-keepers and traders not to pay their dues to the British Government.[131]

There was also a wave of insurrections in Chota-Nagpur among the aboriginal tribes.[132] ". . The military at Hazaribagh revolted on 30 July, 1857, the Ramgarh battalion on 1 August, the infantry and artillery at Lohardaga on 2 August, and the detachment of the Ramgarh troops of Purulia on 5 August. . ."[133]

Both Ranchi and Doranda soon fell under the control of the mutinous sepoys who, as usual, plundered the treasury and released the prisoners. Some of the Zamindars helped the mutineers, while others helped the British officials. The rebels were defeated in a severe engagement at Chatra on 4 October, 1857, in which 46 British soldiers were killed or wounded. Though, as a result of this victory, Hazaribagh, Ranchi and Purulia were re-occupied by the British, the mutiny was merged into a general rising of the civil population in Singhbhum and Palamau. There was a widespread insurrection among the Kols of Singhbhum organized by Raja Arjun Singh of Porahat and his brother. To quell this insurrection proved to be a difficult task. On one occasion a small military force led by Mr. Lushington was suddenly surrounded by about four thousand infuriated Kols and met with a serious reverse, about the middle of January, 1858. "Not an officer escaped unhurt", says the official report. An attack made by the British troops on Chakradharpur, the residence of the Porahat Raja, was also repulsed, but it was soon

captured after the arrival of reinforcements. Though repeatedly defeated, the Kols bravely resisted till the capture of the Raja of Porahat in 1859.

The Cheros and Khairwars of Palamau rose under the leadership of two brothers, Pitambar Sahi and Nilambar (or Lilambar) Sahi. They attacked Chainpur, 2 miles distant from Daltonganj, on 21 October, 1857, but were repulsed by its owner Raghubir Dayal Singh, who gave protection to Lieutenant Graham and his small force when, by the end of November, "the whole country appeared to be up in arms", according to an official report. It was a difficult job to put down the revolt in an area of 40 miles square of intractable hills and dense jungles,—so dense that an enemy might be within a few hundred yards of troops without being discovered. It also appears that the rebels were promised help from Kunwar Singh and his brother, though it is not clear whether any such help was actually received. After several skirmishes, the British force attacked the fort of Palamau and captured it on 21 January, 1858. Though several leaders were captured, Pitambar and Nilambar evaded arrest. As measures of retaliation "their villages were destroyed, their goods and cattle seized, and their estates confiscated to the State". But the insurrection continued throughout 1858 with unabated vigour, marked by plunder of villages and guerilla fights with British forces. Nilambar Sahi and Pitambar Sahi were ultimately captured and hanged, and the revolt was completely subdued in 1859.

Sambalpur was the scene of a prolonged and protracted rebellion under the leadership of Surendra Sai.[133a] Reference has been made above to the disturbances created by him as his right to the throne was not recognized by the British Government, and his imprisonment for life for committing a murder in 1839. While he was serving the sentence, Sambalpur was annexed to the British Dominions by Lord Dalhousie in accordance with the Doctrine of Lapse. As in other localities, newly annexed, British administration was signalised by an enormous increase in the amount of land revenue and the resumption of *Inam* lands. According to official figures the revenue, amounting to Rs. 8,800 before the annexation, was raised to Rs. 74,000 after the introduction of British administration. It caused profound distress and discontent, and when the mutineers released Surendra Sai along with other prisoners in the Ranchi jail, he raised the banner of revolt which was joined by all and sundry. "From the close of 1857 to the commencement of 1862 he remained in a state of war, ran a parallel government of his own and kept the whole country in a dangerous state of excitement".[133b] He sur-

rendered in 1862 and the disturbances ceased for the time being. But they were renewed within a few years as will be related later.

The rebellion in these hilly regions was no doubt of a 'popular character', but there was nothing new in it. They had similarly rebelled many times before,[134] and in several cases, as in Sambalpur, the outbreaks in 1857 were mere *legacies of the past*. To describe it as "a people's war fought with the passions roused up by deeply stirred political sentiment",[135] can only be regarded as hyperbole. They differed in degree, but not in kind, from the previous disturbances noted above

B. *The Panjāb*

In the Panjāb the Government successfully worked upon the traditional hostility between the Muslims and the Sikhs, and the Panjābis and Hindusthanis. The important chiefs, like those of Patiala, Nabha, and Jhind, stood firmly by the British. The Panjāb therefore remained mostly unaffected by outbreaks of civil population, save in the eastern fringe, contiguous to Delhi and Rohilkhand.

In the Western Panjāb the civil population remained unaffected, a notable exception being the rising of the Kharrals under Ahmad Khan in Multan on September 17. Joined by several other tribes on the Ravi, he fought several engagements in one of which he was killed. At one time the insurrection took a serious turn, but was thoroughly crushed in November.[136]

In the Eastern Panjāb the mutineers were joined by the civil population in several places and the mutinies almost partook the character of those of Rohilkhand. At Hissar and Hansi a large number of Europeans and Christians were killed, and a petty official put himself at the head of the administration under the style Shahzada. At Sirsa the rising took a communal turn. The Hindus fled, and the Muslims plundered not only the treasury but also the town and the neighbouring villages. The predatory tribes of the locality took full advantage of the situation, and the Gujars, Ranghars, Pachhadas, Bhattias etc. looted all alike. Some Jath villages in Karnal district refused to pay revenue. They drove out the Government officials, burnt Government buildings, and committed robberies and murders. They had little respect for the mutineers and freely robbed the sepoys who were proceeding to Delhi. In some cases even the ordinary villagers helped the Government against the sepoys. There were also outbreaks at Rohtak and Rewari, but these were easily suppressed.[137]

1. See Ch. XIII.
2 *Narrative*, pp 8-9 The Report is dated November 9, 1858.

3. Ball, I. 39.
4. *SB*-II. 25-6.
5. Ibid, 75.
6. *Narrative*, I. 349 ff.
7. Ibid, 467 ff.
8. *SB*-II, 76-7.
9. Ibid, 77-8.
10. *Siege*, pp. 62-3.
11. See above, pp. 18-19.
12. Metcalfe, 83 ff. Majumdar, 117.
13. Metcalfe, 83. The fact is admitted by Ahsanulla himself (*TB*, 252). As such things must have been treated as confidential, Jiwanlal's knowledge of it shows that he had very reliable and important source of information.
14. For all these disgraceful intrigues, cf. Majumdar, 120-24; *PIHRC*, XXXIII, Part II, p. 115; Sen, 94-7.
15. Jiwanlal Munshi and Mainuddin were in Delhi during the siege of 1857, and wrote accounts of what they saw and heard during these eventful months. Their accounts, originally written in Persian, were translated into English by C. T. Metcalfe, and published under the title "*Two Native Narratives of the Mutiny in Delhi*".

    Jiwanlal Munshi was an officer attached to the household of Bahadur Shah A writer by caste and profession, he recorded, in the form of a diary, each day's events as they happened. He employed some men to secure information from all quarters. He was undoubtedly pro-British, and may have acted as their spy or secret agent But that does not take away from the authentic character of the news recorded (and probably supplied to the British) by him. His profession required the supply of accurate information, and Jiwanlal had ample means to secure it (see fn 13 above). Many of his important statements have been corroborated by independent evidence. Mr S A. A. Rizvi has argued that no value should be attached to the account of Jiwanlal as he was a British spy (*Freedom*, UP, p. xix). The profession of a spy is no doubt an ignoble one, but that does not take away the value of information supplied by him. so far at least as the facts, not views, are concerned

    Mainuddin Hasan Khan was a Police Officer in Delhi before the Mutiny, and, though not disloyal to the English, transferred his service to Bahadur Shah when he was declared King In view of his official position he must have possessed an intimate knowledge of the state of affairs in Delhi
16. Metcalfe, 85.
17. Ibid, 86.
18. Ibid, 92-3.
19. Ibid, 101-2.
20. Ibid, 121.
21. Ibid, 168.
22. Ibid.
23. Ibid, 200.
24. Ibid, 228.
25. *TB*, p. 8.
26. Ibid, 9.
27. India Office Manuscripts, London, Vol. 725, pp 25-147; for the quotations, cf. 66, 85.
28. Metcalfe, 86.
29. Ibid, 87.
30. *TB*, 26 ff.
31. See fn., 15 above.
32. Metcalfe, 65.
33. Ibid, 92.
34. Ibid, 100.
35. Ibid, 100-1.
36. Ibid, 104-5.
37. Ibid, 93.
38. *TB*, 165-6.
39. See p. 506.
40. Sen, 91.
41. For a detailed account of negotiations of Bahadur Shah with the Indian chiefs,

which came to nothing, cf. Ahsanulla's evidence (*TB*, 263) and Majumdar, 124-27.

42. Jiwanlal writes: "News was received that the mutineers were intimidating the city people, and that 200 troopers, having plundered a quantity of money, had deserted and gone off to their homes, and had in turn been attacked by the Gujars and plundered" (Metcalfe, 92). A few other instances of this character will be referred to later, in course of the narrative of the mutiny in other localities.
43. Italics mine.
44. India Office Mss.
45. Metcalfe, 98.
46. Ibid, 98-9.
47. India Office Mss.
48. Sen, 85.
49. Sen, 85-6.
50. Metcalfe, 91.
51. Ibid, 95.
52. *TB*, 270.
53. Metcalfe, 68.
54. Sen, 84.
55. Durgadas Bandyopadhyaya, a Bengali, employed as a clerk in the Cavalry Department at Bareilly at the time He has written a book, in Bengali, narrating in detail the incidents of the mutiny at Bareilly. For his account of the beginning of the mutiny at Bareilly see Sen, 346-7
56. Sen, 347-8
57. Sen, 349.
57a. *Narrative*, 372.
58. Durgadas Bandvopadhyaya, *Bidrohe Bangali* (in Bengali), pp 146, 206, 211, 215-6, 343, 459. The official *Narrative* (p. 374) also refers to the anti-Bengali feelings of Khan Bahadur's Government. As regards the communal tension mentioned by Bandyopadhyaya, the following statement in the official *Narrative* (p. 378) corroborates it: "Nana arrived at Bareilly on 25 March and remained there till the end of April (1858). He found that the rebellion had assumed an entirely Muhammadan character; he made some attempts to put a stop to cow-killing in the city and also to induce the Hindus to join the Mahomedans in opposing the English, but without success." Another statement in the same official *Narrative* may also be quoted in this connection "After the fall of Lucknow Firoz Shah returned to Bareilly with about 1,000 men, and then by a sudden attack got possession of Moradabad for one day; he at once issued orders for a tax on all Hindus Next day, being attacked by the troops of the Nawab of Rampur he fled to Bareilly (*Narrative*, I 378).
59. Holmes, 138-40; Kaye-I. Vol III, 296 ff.
60. Kaye-I, II 363
61. Malleson, III. 401
62. *SB*-II, 110; Malleson, II 520
63. *Narrative*, 443 ff, summarised in SB-II, 116-7
64. Referred to in this chapter as *Narrative*.
65. *Narrative*, pp. 459 ff
66. *SB*-II, 115.
67. *Narrative*, 213 ff
68. Ibid, 92 ff.
69. Ibid, 64 ff.
70. Ibid, 521 ff, SB-II. 209.
71. *SB*-II. 209-10
72. *Narrative*, I. 546 ff.
73. Majumdar, 240 For the documents cf *BPP*, LXXVI, Part I, p. 52, III-B and pp. 53-4, III-D.
74. Holmes, 496.
75. *SB*-II. 223.
76. Ibid, 207.
77. Ibid, 215.
78. Ibid.
79. Ibid, 207.
80. Ibid, 226.
81. Ibid, 223.

82. Ibid, 210.
83. *Narrative*, p. 357.
84. *SB*-II, 109.
85. Ibid, 108; Italics mine.
86. Malleson, II. 520.
86a. Sen, 409.
87. Cf. Raikes, 156 ff., quoted in Majumdar, 219; also Sen, 410-11, where other views are quoted.
88. See above, pp. 309-10.
89. Holmes, 259-60; Forrest-I, I. 217.
90. Holmes, 523, f.n., 1.
90a. For a list of the rebel Talukdars, cf. SB-II. 121 ff., 129 ff., 305 ff.
91. *Narrative*, 53 ff. Muhammad Hasan is usually referred to as ex-Nazim of Gorakhpur. In the earlier stages of the mutiny he should, more properly, be called ex-Nazim of Gonda, the post he held under the Nawab of Awadh. (Cf. Forbes's letter quoted in *SB*-II, 306).
92. Holmes, 265.
93. The account is based on Holmes, 273 ff. The date of the first general assault is given as 21 July by Malleson (I. 449).
94. *SB*-II, 127, 135.
95. Holmes, 297.
96. Ibid, 271; For a list of the Talukdars who joined the besieging force at Lakhnau, cf. *SB*-II. 130-31.
97. Holmes has elaborately discussed the question in Appendix S, pp. 624 ff.
98. Dr. S. B. Chaudhuri has discussed the question at length in Appendix C(*SB*-II, 309 ff.).
99. For the statements referred to above, cf. the two Appendices of Holmes and Chaudhuri referred to in the two preceding footnotes.
100. *SB*-II, 119.
101. Sen, 197.
102. Ibid, 187.
103. Ibid, 224.
104. Gubbins, 156.
105. Sen, 215.
106. Holmes, 587; *SB*-II, 119-20, 130.
107. For the names of a few Talukdars who were at first loyal to the British, but later turned against them, cf. *SB*-II, 120, 121, f.n., 2. Dr. Chaudhuri is constrained to admit that "the widespread idea that the British rule was fast disappearing induced many chiefs like the rajas of Nagar and Satsi and the zamindars of Amorah to take up arms" (p. 145).
108. Gubbins, 158.
109. So comments Dr. Sen (p. 188). Whether Hanumant Singh deserves the epithet 'true-hearted' will perhaps be questioned by many. But according to some official records (*Secret Letters from India*, India Office, London, Vol. 163, pp. 403-5) Hanumant Singh fought against the British at Lakhnau in October (Cf. *SB*-II. 139, 141, 143, 310).
110. See above, p. 538.
111. *SB*-II, 145,147. The Rani of Basti was the niece of Kunwar Singh, the great leader of the rebellion in Bihar. The fact that she challenged the authority of Muhammad Hasan shows that there was hardly any conception of common cause even among the leading figures.
112. The whole correspondence between Muhammad Hasan and Khair-ud-[illegible] has been given by Sen (App. II, pp. 385-91). Hasan's letter contains noble sentiments and presents a refreshing contrast to the cringing appeal of Nana, for mercy, to the British Government, in similar circumstances. But it would be a mistake to elevate him to the status of a national hero. The following passage in his letter is significant: "This rebellion arose solely out of the annexation of Oude. Had that not taken place there would have been no bloodshed, because no defection of the chiefs, who would have on the contrary, inflicted chastisement on the mutinous sepoys." (p. 388). But one may legitimately doubt whether the allegiance or loyalty to the king of Awadh was the sole cause or even the main spring of his action. He did not join the mutineers of Awadh at the beginning. Nor does it appear that he flocked to the standard of Begam Hazrat Mahal and placed his resources at her service.

113. The name of none of these is included in the list, given by Gubbins, of the rebel leaders who distinguished themselves by the most active and unprovoked hostility in the early phase of the war. Dr. Chaudhuri also does not refer to their activities in connection with the siege of Lakhnau (Gubbins, 487; *SB*-II. 131-2).
114. *Secret Letters from India*, 1858, Vol. 163, pp. 443-445, quoted in *SB*-II. 134-5.
115. That is, when the King of Awadh was dethroned
116. The age of Kunwar Singh is given as about 70 by Dr. Sen (p 255) and 75 in the *Freedom, Bihar*, I 27
117. For detailed discussion, cf. Majumdar; 166 ff., Sen 255 ff.
118. *Freedom, Bihar*, I. 26.
119. *SB*-II. 167.
120. *Freedom, Bihar*, I. 26.
121. Sen, 257
122. *SB*-II. 170.
123. Kaye-I. III. 100, f n
124. *SB*-II, 170, f n, 1
125. Neither this, nor the evidence of Nishan Singh is mentioned in the big three-volume official publication, *Freedom, Bihar*.
126. SB-II, 168-9.
127. *Patna University Journal*, VIII (1954). Dr Sen has satisfactorily explained how Kunwar Singh could join the mutinous sepoys at Arrah with his retainers at a very short notice.
128 Sen, 255, Holmes puts the total number as 68 (p 191).
129 The resistance of the small garrison to the force led by Kunwar Singh is one of the most thrilling episodes in the history of the Mutiny, perhaps not ranking below the heroic defence of Lakhnau. The failure to reduce the garrison reflects the greatest discredit on the valour and resourcefulness of the sepoys, and shows, in striking contrast, those very qualities so remarkably displayed by the handful of Englishmen
130. *SB*-II, 173.
131. Ibid, 182-3.
132 For a detailed account of the rebellions, cf. *SB*-II, 183 ff., *Freedom, Bihar*, 50 ff.; *Journal of the University of Bihar*, II 78
133. *SB*-II, 183.
133a *Sambalpur* DG, 26-7; *SB*-II. 196 ff
133b. *SB*-II 196
134. See above, pp 444, 454 ff
135. *SB*-II. 191
136. Sen. 343-4.
137. *SB*-II. 235 ff.

CHAPTER XVIII

RESTORATION OF ORDER

At the time of the outbreak of the Mutiny, the native troops in the whole of India amounted to two hundred and thirty-two thousand, two hundred and twenty-four men, while there were only forty-five thousand five hundred and twenty-two European soldiers of all arms including 6,170 officers.[1] The distribution of these soldiers was still more favourable to the sepoys. Large masses of sepoys were concentrated at a number of stations between Calcutta and Delhi, but there was only a single British regiment at Agra, and another at Danapur.

The sepoys, however, failed to take advantage of this favourable situation. It appears that they had no general plan of a regular campaign. Had they any, then, after they had established complete control over Awadh and Rohilkhand, they must have concentrated upon at least two points: (1) the security of Delhi as their base of operations by preventing the British coming from the Panjāb; and (2) a swift march in large numbers towards the east with the two-fold object of preventing attack from that direction and seizing the citadel of British power, namely, Calcutta. According to all reasonable calculations the sepoys at Delhi and the rebel chiefs of Rohilkhand, pooling their resources, could have defended the narrow highway in the Karnal district through which alone the troops from the Panjāb could approach Delhi. Further, "they might have swept down the valley of the Ganges, seized Allahabad, Benares, and Patna, and, gathering strength on their way till their numbers had become irresistible, destroyed every trace of European civilisation, and massacred every European till they had reached the frontiers of Eastern Bengal".[2] But the sepoys neither made any aggressive campaign towards the east, nor took sufficient measures to prevent the siege of Delhi.

The inactivity of the sepoys enabled the British Government to take immediate steps to prevent these two dangerous moves. They despatched expeditionary forces from Calcutta towards the west, and arranged to concentrate their forces, already in the west, for the supreme task of retaking Delhi, which they rightly judged to be the real centre of the whole revolution. Instead of giving a chronological account of the various military incidents, it would be more

convenient to describe in broad outline the general features of these two campaigns.

As soon as the news of the Mutiny reached Lord Canning, the Governor-General, he took all possible steps to concentrate all the available forces from Bombay, Madras, and Pegu in Calcutta; he even requested the Governor of Ceylon to send him as many men as possible, and, on his own responsibility, asked the British Expeditionary force, proceeding to China, to divert its course to Calcutta. At the same time he ordered John Lawrence, the Chief Commissioner of the Panjāb, to send down every available Sikh and European soldier from the Panjāb to Delhi. In answer to Canning's appeal Colonel James Neill of the 1st Madras Fusiliers arrived in Calcutta towards the end of May, and was entrusted with the work of securing Banaras and Allahabad, and relieving Kanpur.

Neill arrived at Banaras on June 3, and next day came the news of the mutiny of sepoys at Azamgarh (June 3). It was decided, as a measure of safety, to disarm the 37th N. I. at Banaras, though they had as yet showed no signs of disaffection. The hour of disarming was discussed for a long time and Neill threw his weight in favour of immediate action. "He was one of those who wisely thought from the first, that to strike promptly and to strike vigorously would be to strike mercifully".[3] So a parade was held on the 4th June at 5 P.M. in order to disarm the 37th N.I. with the help of the European troops aided by the loyal Sikhs and Irregular Cavalry. The sepoys submitted without resistance, though not without protest. Then, suddenly, the European troops were seen coming with cartridges and grape-shots, and all along the sepoy line ran the cry that they had come to kill the sepoys. Some of the sepoys took up the arms they had laid down and fired upon the European troops. The latter returned the fire and the artillery poured in a shower of grape upon the mutineers who fled. What followed is not exactly known, as the accounts differ. The Sikhs and the Irregular Cavalry had just reached the parade ground According to one version, the artillery opened fire on them without provocation, while according to the other, one of the Irregulars had fired at his commanding officer, and the Sikhs, apprehensive of treachery, rushed wildly against the artillery men. In any case, there was fearful discharge of grape from the artillery against the Sikhs, who broke and fled. Neill, who had taken command in the meantime, pursued the Sikhs and gained a complete victory. Even Tucker, the Commissioner, held that the business of disarming was managed very badly, and the Governor-General agreed with him. As Kaye says, it was

done badly because it was done hastily, for which Neill was mainly responsible.[4]

Fortunately for the British, the Raja of Banaras and some leading Sikh and Hindu Chiefs loyally stood by them. Surat Singh, a Sikh Chief interned by the British at Banaras after the Second Sikh War, now came to their rescue, and pacified the Sikh soldiers guarding the *cutchery* "who might have been excused if they were burning to avenge the blood of their slaughtered comrades". The *cutchery* was full of the English Civilians with their families, and contained the Government treasury, including the crown-jewels of Rani Jindan, the exiled Sikh Queen-mother. The temptation of massacring the Englishmen and plundering the treasury was too great and might be well justified by the treatment meted out to the Sikh soldiers on the parade ground. But at Surat Singh's persuasion they desisted from both. The refugee Englishmen suffered no injury and the treasure was conveyed to a place of safety.

Far different was the attitude of Neill. He was not content merely with the suppression of the mutiny. He proclaimed the majesty of the British power by instituting a veritable reign of terror in which the guilty and the innocent were alike treated with the most barbarous cruelty to which reference will be made later.

The events of Banaras had wide repercussions, as the sepoys now came to believe that even loyalty and faithfulness was no guarantee against ill-treatment by the authorities. Further, the news spread that the men of the 37th N. I. had been disarmed first and then killed, and this easily led to a wide-spread belief that the British officers had matured a plan of exterminating the entire Bengal Army.

There is little doubt that the mutiny at Allahabad was the direct result of such feelings. The 6th N. I. posted there had offered to march against the mutineers at Delhi, but on 6 June they rose in arms. The usual things happened. The convicts were released; the city mob joined the sepoys; Europeans were hunted out and killed; houses were plundered and burnt, and even Hindu pilgrims suffered at the hands of the rowdies. Indeed no element was lacking in making it a "tremendous upsurge of the city populace" which is thus described by Dr. Chaudhuri: The populace "first inaugurated a religious war by hoisting the flag of the Prophet in the *chouk*. They then joined the sepoys in pillage; railway works and telegraphic wires were destroyed, the treasury plundered, and records burnt. After a short period the universal rapine with all its confusions began to take the shape of an organised rebellion and culminated in the assumption of power by Maulavi Liakatali,

a common school master, a weaver by caste, who proclaimed the rule of the King of Delhi and passed himself as his governor. His reign was of short duration, but he was actively supported by a wide circle of eminent Mahomedans."[5] An eminent Indian historian has recorded it to the credit of the Maulavi that "many Indian Christians were permitted to purchase their lives at the price of their religion".[6] Many would perhaps regard it as a doubtful compliment.

But though the city was lost the British still held the fort, mainly with he help of 400 loyal Sikhs. Neill hastened from Banaras to relieve Allahabad. As horses were not available, he made the peasants draw his coach and reached Allahabad on 11 June. Within a week he cleared the city of all insurgents and then let loose his myrmidons who perpetrated all sorts of cruelties and barbarities which human ingenuity could conceive. Indiscriminate hanging and shooting without regard to age or sex, and general burning and plundering of houses and entire villages were the order of the day, regular punitive expeditions being sent for this purpose both by land and the river.

But evil sometimes recoils on its own doers. Kanpur was piteously crying for help, but Neill's march was delayed. Neill thought it his first duty to terrorise the natives and teach them a lesson, and then, when he was ready to start, he found that his penal measures had scared away the people to such an extent that neither food nor labourers were to be had in the region through which his forces had to pass. Even if he had left Allahabad on the 20th, as he could easily have done, Kanpur would have been saved. "It was Neill's hand that signed in letters of blood the doom of Kanpur and decreed the ordeal of Lucknow".[7] On the credit side of Neill must be put the not unjustified claim that "within a few days he had paralyzed the insurgent population of a crowded city and a wide district, and had rebuilt the shattered fabric of British authority."[8] A movable column was now formed at Allahabad "for the relief of Lucknow and Cawnpore and the destruction of all mutineers and insurgents in North-Western India".[9] Henry Havelock, who was placed in command of this column, left Allahabad on July 7.

As mentioned above,[10] Nana Sahib proclaimed himself as Peshwa on 26 June. While he was enjoying himself in his palace at Bithur with feasts and revels, and issuing grandiloquent proclamations[11] announcing the extermination of the English, Havelock was advancing with an army for the relief of Kanpur. The military inefficiency of Nana and his sepoys was as manifest in their opposition to the advancing British troops as during their siege of

Kanpur. His army chose an excellent position on the banks of the river Pandu-nadi, 23 miles from Kanpur. But by an incredible folly they did not destroy the bridge which spanned the river. The British army, on the other hand, after defeating the enemy at the village of Aong on the morning of July 15, and five hours' march under the sun, had reached within six miles of this unfordable river. But as soon as Havelock heard that the enemy troops had gathered in great strength on the banks of this river, he immediately resumed his march. On reaching the river the British troops charged over the bridge, captured the enemy's guns and forced them to retreat towards Kanpur.

Alarmed by this news, Nana perpetrated the horrible massacre of the British prisoners—men, women, and children,—which will be described later. After this nefarious deed Nana marched out with five thousand men and chose a very strong and strategic position on the Grand Trunk Road, about seven miles from Kanpur. But Havelock, after a brilliant display of strategy and courage, completely defeated Nana's troops. Nana rallied his troops and made a heroic stand, planting a gun in the middle of the road which created great havoc upon the advancing British troops. But again the superior dash and courage of the British men and officers carried everything before them, and the sepoys rushed in head-long flight from the battlefield (July 16). It culminated in a veritable rout, and Nana's troops melted away in no time. Nana himself rode straight to Bithur and fled with his family to the other side of the Ganga. It is reported that he covered his flight by declaring to his followers that he was going to commit suicide by drowning himself in that sacred river. The truth of this report, however, cannot be verified.[12]

We may now pass on to the Western theatre of operations. General Anson, the Commander-in-Chief of the British forces in India, was at Simla when he heard, on May 12, the news of the outbreak at Mirat. Although he made preliminary arrangements for an aggressive campaign, he thought it imprudent to risk an advance against Delhi with the small force then at his command. His plan was "to concentrate his whole force between the Sutlej and the Jumna, and, permitting the fire of rebellion to burn itself out within these limits, to wait until the arrival of reinforcements should enable him to quench it once for all".[13] But both the Governor-General, Lord Canning, and Sir John Lawrence, the Chief Commissioner of the Panjāb, held very different views. They regarded the recovery of Delhi as of supreme importance in restoring the shattered prestige and dignity of the British rule in India, and "were prepared to sacrifice everything to this grand object".[14]

Anson had to obey the orders of his superior authority, and made his plan accordingly. But before he could carry it out, he died of cholera on May 27. General Sir Henry Barnard, who succeeded him, advanced at once to join the forces from Mirat which had been ordered to proceed towards Delhi, with a view to concentrating his whole force under the walls of that city.

The British troops left Mirat on 27 May under the command of Brigadier Wilson. Three days later they were opposed by the sepoys from Delhi who had occupied a strong position on the banks of the Hindun river, a few miles from Delhi. The sepoys were defeated and fled to Delhi, but returned next day with reinforcements. They were again defeated and retreated to Delhi. Wilson then marched unopposed and joined Barnard at Baghpat, twelve miles from Delhi, on 7 June. The sepoys had, in the meantime, occupied a strong position at a place called Badli-ka-Sarai, about five miles to the north-west of Delhi. The British made a frontal attack and carried the position by assault, though the sepoys fought bravely and had the advantages of both terrain and number. They fell back and took their position on the Ridge, an elevated and continuous line of rocky ground, which extended from the banks of the Yamuna for about a distance of two miles skirting along the north and west of the walled city of Delhi, and at one point at a distance of less than a mile from its Kashmiri Gate It was a very strategic position, as it commanded the whole of the walled city of Delhi. The sepoys, helped by the guns of the city, held out resolutely for some time, but were ultimately driven back within the city walls. The British force was much smaller than the sepoys, and suffered from the galling fires directed against it not only from the heavy battery which the sepoys had established at the Flagstaff Tower on the Ridge, but also from the cover of walls and gardens. The casualties of the British were naturally very heavy, but they secured a commanding position of inestimable value. Henceforth the Ridge formed the base of their operations.

Both Canning and Lawrence, and with them many others who had no personal knowledge of the strength of Delhi, fondly hoped that the capture of Delhi would be a comparatively easy task, and the period of siege would not extend beyond a few days. But they were sadly mistaken. The city "was surrounded by a wall, about seven miles in extent and some twenty-four feet in height, strengthened by a number of bastions, and possessing ten massive gates. Around the wall ran a dry ditch, about twenty-five feet wide and rather less than twenty feet deep". The fortifications of the city were recently repaired and the British General soon discovered that they were too

strong to be battered down by the artillery he had at his disposal. The force under him was, of course, too small for the purpose of blockading the city, and a part of it had to be employed for preventing the enemy from cutting off his communications with the Panjāb to which alone he could look for supply and reinforcements. In spite, therefore, of the strongly expressed desire of the Government that he should capture Delhi without delay, and the irrepressible ardour of some younger officers to the same effect, he did not try to take the city by assault. He occupied the Ridge and placed his troops behind it, in regular cantonments, thus preparing himself for a long operation. All the while, Delhi's communications with the other parts of India remained absolutely safe and unhampered, and the ranks of the sepoys were swelled by fresh arrivals.

The state of things inside the walls of Delhi has been described above The mutinous sepoys from various localities had gathered at Delhi and they lacked neither courage nor military qualities. But there were no officers to guide their operations as a combined unit, and no general to formulate a strategic plan of the whole campaign. Thy abandoned the Ridge without making an effort corresponding to its vital importance; they allowed the house of Metcalfe to fall into the hands of the enemy whose left wing thereby stretched to the river. Once the sepoys attacked the British from the rear of the Ridge and held their ground, when the evening came and the British retired with heavy loss. It was a serious danger for the British, for if the sepoys held on to the position they occupied, "British communication with the Punjab would have been completely cut off and they would have found themselves besieged on the ridge".[15] But the sepoys did not realize the advantages and quietly retired during the night. "Many devout Englishmen on the ridge sincerely believed that God was with them and had confounded their enemies".[16] The sepoys also believed in their stars and trusted in the prophecy that the British rule would last for only 100 years. So on June 23, the centenary of the Battle of Plassey (Palasi), they furiously attacked the British. They fought desperately with stubborn courage, and for a long time victory inclined to their side. "But science ultimately triumphed over number and brawn yielded to brain".[17]

Mention has been made above how, while this life-and-death struggle was going on, the internal situation in Delhi was getting worse every day. Although more and more mutinous sepoys were pouring into that ill-fated city, it did not really enhance their effective military strength or efficiency, due to the lack of discipline and organization, and the hostile attitude of the civil population for which

the sepoys had to thank themselves. On the other hand, reinforcements from the Panjāb steadily poured in, and the strength of the British besieging force had gone up to 6,600.

It is a very strange feature of the strategy of the sepoys that no determined and sustained effort was made to intercept the troops coming from the Panjāb in the long and narrow region between Karnal and Delhi through which they had to pass.[18] The site was admirably suited to such purpose, and history shows that whenever India was threatened by foreign invaders from the north-west, her fate was decided in a final contest over the possession of this bottleneck. But though history and geography alike pointed out the great strategic position of this area, the sepoys never fully grasped the advantage offered by it. They concentrated their whole attention upon the British force on the Ridge. Sepoys from every part of India poured into Delhi, and it almost became a custom for every fresh band of mutineers to attack the British on the Ridge. Thus the fighting on the Ridge continued, almost without a pause, and more than twenty battles were fought between June 8 and July 18.

It was suspected by the sepoys, and is now known with certainty, that while all this grim fight was going on, Bahadur Shah, the leader of the sepoys, his chief queen, sons, and the most trusted adviser, Hakim Ahsanulla, were all conspiring with the English. The intrigues failed probably because the British had realized that these people had really no power to do any good or ill to them, all effective authority being concentrated in the hands of the sepoys, But the treacherous intrigues and the conduct of the sepoys give us an inside view of the moral bankruptcy of the spirit lying behind the struggle against the British. While the British were of one mind and pursuing, under able leadership and with a dogged determination, the common and glorious objective of capturing Delhi as the first step towards recovering their lost empire, the sepoys were fighting under the leadership of a traitor, without any clear goal or high moral idea, inspired only by the hatred of the English and a desire to drive them away and save themselves.[19] The result of such a fight could not be long in doubt, even if the two forces were equally matched. But, as the events had repeatedly proved, the sepoys were no match for their opponents in point of strategy or generalship.

On August 7, Nicholson arrived with reinforcements from the Panjāb, and the siege-train was on its way. The sepoys made an attempt to intercept it, and sent a large force to Nujufgarh. But it was defeated by Nicholson with only two thousand men on August 25, and the siege-train arrived safely on the 4th September. After

making all necessary preparation, the British force made a full-scale attack on Delhi on September 14. The Kashmir Gate was forced, and a few columns of the British troops advanced as far as the Chandni Chawk; but as the other columns could not make equally satisfactory progress, they had to fall back. The casualty was very heavy on both sides, and brave Nicholson was mortally wounded near the Kashmir Gate. The net result of the day's fighting was that the British troops had effected an entrance into the city; but their position was still very insecure, as the defenders held their own in many sectors. During the next three days the British force slowly advanced into the heart of the city, being resisted by the sepoys at every stage. The formidable Lahore bastion was won by sapping the houses leading to it during the 18th and 19th. On September 20, the British troops took the Lahore Gate and the Jumma Masjid, and finally the gates of the Red Fort were blown in, and the British flag flew from its rampart.

When the fall of Delhi became imminent, Bakht Khan, the Commander of the sepoys, left the city with his troops, and requested Bahadur Shah to accompany him. But the latter refused, and took shelter with his family in the tomb of Humayun, about six miles to the south of the Red Fort. Hodson, who was in charge of the Intelligence Department, came to know of this, and pointed out to the Commanding Officer the supreme importance of seizing the person of the King. In order to facilitate the capture, it was decided to offer the King the guarantee for his life. Whether the suggestion originally came from Hodson or Wilson, the Commander-in-Chief, it is difficult to say.[20]

Bahadur Shah surrendered to Hodson on the sole condition that his life should be spared. Thereupon he, along with his favourite Begam Zinnat Mahal and her son, was taken to the Palace within the Red Fort, on 21 September. Next day Hodson again rode to Humayun's tomb and arrested two sons of the King and one of his grandsons. Sending them in a bullock-cart to the city, Hodson remained behind to deal with the crowd of about 6,000 men who had gathered round the princes. He sternly ordered them to surrender their arms, and they obeyed. Hodson then rode towards the city and found that the cart carrying the princes was surrounded by a huge crowd. According to his own version, the crowd menaced the escort and he felt that unless he killed the princes the mob would rescue them. So, he ordered the three princes to strip off their upper garments, and, seizing a carbine fron one of his men, shot them all dead. No reasonable man has ever attached the least value to the excuse offered by Hodson for this brutal conduct, which even English histo-

rians, not particularly critical of the terrorism let loose upon the hapless citizens of Delhi, have described as an outrage against humanity.[21]

Bahadur Shah, having spent some months in a miserable room in the palace, was tried by a court martial for rebellion and complicity in the murder of Europeans. He was found guilty and sentenced to imprisonment for life. He was exiled to Rangoon with his favourite queen, and died after four years, on November 7, 1862.

It is now necessary to go back a little and trace the military campaigns in the eastern zone. As mentioned above,[22] Havelock finally defeated Nana on July 16, and next day he entered Kanpur. On July 20, Neill joined him with a small force, and remained in charge of defending Kanpur, while Havelock proceeded towards Lakhnau to relieve the garrison there.

In the meantime clouds were gathering round Kanpur. After the defeat and flight of Nana, the real authority and initiative had passed into the hands of his able and devoted lieutenant Tantia Topi, to whom reference has been made above. Shortly after Havelock left Kanpur, Tantia gathered round him, or joined, a force of four thousand men at Bithur and threatened Kanpur On hearing this news Havelock returned and inflicted a severe defeat upon Tantia Topi on 16 August. Then Tantia received orders from Nana to proceed to Gwalior to win over the sepoys of the Gwalior contingent. He succeeded in his task and, returning with the mutinous troops seized Kalpi. Henceforth Tantia took his orders from Rao Sahib. the nephew of Nana, whom he had sent to Kalpi Rao Sahib asked Tantia to seize Kanpur. Leaving a small detachment for defence, Tantia advanced upon Kanpur which was left in charge of General Windham with a small force. Though Tantia was defeated on the Pandu-nadi on 26 November, he attacked Kanpur the next day, and after a strenuous fight for two days repulsed the British troops. The whole city as well as the baggage and stores fell into his hand. Bnt the entrenchments and the bridge of boats over the Ganga were still in the possession of the British. At this critical moment Sir Collin Campbell, the British Commander-in-Chief, who had gone to relieve Lakhnau, hastened back to Kanpur and won a complete victory over Tantia's troops on 6 December. That was the last battle fought for Kanpur. Tantia fell back upon Kalpi, and his future activities were confined to the region further south to which reference will be made later.

It is now time to turn to Lakhnau where the tiny besieged garrison at the Residency were heroically defending themselves against enormous odds since June 30. As mentioned above, Havelock, im-

mediately after the capture of Kanpur, proceeded towards Lakhnau on 25 July. The whole countryside was full of mutinous sepoys and many chiefs and landlords had joined them, as noted above. He won two successive victories at Unao and Basiratgunj on July 29, but "cholera, fatigue, exposure and the fire of the enemy had made such sad inroads on his little army"[23] that he thought it beyond his power to relieve Lakhnau without reinforcements, and retreated to Managalwar. But as his hope of receiving reinforcements did not materialize, he again advanced towards Lakhnau on August 4. He again won a victory at Basiratgunj on August 5, but was forced to fall back for the same reasons as before. On the 11th he received an urgent summons to come to the aid of Neill at Kanpur. In order to counteract the idea that he was fleeing from Awadh for fear, he advanced, inflicted another defeat on the enemy at Basiratgunj on August 12, fell back on Kanpur, and defeated Tantia Topi at Bithur on the 16th as stated above.

The retreat of Havelock had a very serious effect. The Talukdars or Chiefs of Awadh, who were hitherto sitting on the fence, now felt that the British Government was doomed, and cast in their lot with the rebels.[24]

For his failure to relieve Lakhnau Havelock was superseded in favour of Sir James Outram. Outram reached Kanpur on September 15, and immediately organized an expedition for the relief of Lakhnau. With characteristic magnanimity, unparalleled in military history, he put Havelock in charge of it, so that the honour of relieving Lakhnau might accrue to him. He himself accompanied the force in his civil capacity as Chief Commissioner of Awadh, waiving his rank for the occasion and tendering his military services to General Havelock as a volunteer. The augmented army under Havelock crossed the Ganga on September 19 and 20, and having fought two battles on the way, joined the garrison at Lakhnau on the evening of the 25th. But the main object of the expedition, viz., to remove the besieged people to a place of safety, such as Kanpur, was not fulfilled. For the army was not strong enough for the purpose, and sufficient means of transport were not available for conveying the women and children, the sick and the wounded. Outram, therefore, decided to wait until the arrival of a strong relieving force.

After the fall of Delhi, Sir Colin Campbell, the new Commander-in-Chief of the British forces in India, made the relief of Lakhnau his first objective. He started from Calcutta on October 27, and reached the city about the middle of November. After defeating the opposing forces he joined the besieged in the Residency on November

17, but in view of the large number of mutinous sepoys still surrounding that city, and the immediate need of relieving Kanpur, he did not continue his operations against the mutineers. Instead, he decided to start for Kanpur with the women, children, the sick, and the wounded, leaving Outram to hold the rebels in check until his return. The Residency was vacated, and Outram took his position at Alambagh outside the city. Havelock had died of dysentery at Lakhnau on 24 November.

It has been noted above how Sir Colin Campbell reached Kanpur at a critical moment, on 29 November, the day after the city had fallen into the hands of Tantia Topi. After sending to Allahabad the convoy of the women and children, the sick and the wounded, whom he had brought from Lakhnau, Campbell inflicted a crushing defeat upon Tantia Topi on 6 December.

Sir Colin next occupied Fategarh, and sent flying columns to restore order in the Doab which was still full of mutinous sepoys and other rebel elements. Meanwhile, grand preparations were set on foot to reconquer Awadh. This task was facilitated by the generous assistance offered by the Government of Nepal. A Gurkha army had already arrived in July, 1857, and taken possession of the districts of Azamgarh and Jaunpur after inflicting four successive defeats upon the rebels. But still the depredations continued. Canning thereupon requested Jang Bahadur to lead a Gurkha army through the northern parts of Varanasi Division and, after expelling the rebels, to proceed to Lakhnau to join the Commander-in-Chief. Jang Bahadur accordingly entered the British territory in December, 1857, at the head of an army of nine thousand men, and won some victories. In the meantime Sir Colin had equipped a most powerful army consisting of seventeen battalions of infantry, twenty-eight squadrons of cavalry, and a hundred and thirty-four guns and mortars, and left Kanpur on 28 February for Lakhnau

Outram was defending his post at Alambagh, outside the city of Lakhnau, with a force which originally amounted to 4,442 men, of whom three-fourths were Europeans, and twenty-five pieces of artillery. But allowing for the force required for garrisoning and convoy duties, little more than two thousand men were available for action in the field. As against this, the besieging force consisted of thirty-seven regiments of sepoys, fourteen of new levies, one hundred and six of irregulars, twenty-six of cavalry, four or five which fled to Lakhnau from Fategarh, a camel corps and artillery-men, besides the Talukdars with their retainers, and other elements,—in all at least over a hundred thousand men.[25]

During the three months that had passed since Sir Colin's last military expedition to Lakhnau, the rebel forces, who were now in complete possession of the whole of the city, had considerably improved its defences by means of ramparts, bastions, and barricades. But in spite of their vast superiority in numbers they could not dislodge Outram from his fortified post at Alambagh. Maulavi Ahmadulla, who was a leading figure among the besiegers, knew full well that the British post must be taken now or never, and infused new strength and courage among them. On December 22, they tried to cut off the communication of Outram with Kanpur, but the latter, who forestalled their design, inflicted a severe defeat upon them, and they remained inactive for the next three weeks. On January 12 and 16, they again attacked Outram but were again defeated. On hearing the news of the huge preparations being made by Campbell, Ahmadulla made repeated efforts on February 15, 16, 21 and 25, but failed on each occasion. These failures sealed the fate of Lakhnau. On March 3 and 4, the advanced section of the British army reached the outskirts of the city, and though the sepoys fought with stubborn courage, and offered resistance till the last, contesting every inch of ground even within the city itself, the British gained possession of the whole city by 21 March. The Gurkha troops under Jang Bahadur had joined the British army on 11 March, and took part in the assault on Lakhnau.

But the fall of Lakhnau did not materially contribute to the weakening of the rebellion in Awadh. By an incredible folly Sir Colin Campbell did not follow up the capture of Lakhnau by any serious attempt to pursue and cut off the forces besieging that city. About sixty or seventy thousand armed men, with forty or fifty guns, who were thus allowed to retreat, scattered themselves all over Awadh, and their number was swelled by numerous other rebels roaming at large in that province. Fortunately for the British, these had no cohesion among themselves and were divided into a large number of groups. Each of these groups mostly acted for itself, and it is only on rare occasions that two or more of them joined to fight the common foe.

The most important of these groups was led by the Begam Hazrat Mahal, acting in close concert with that under Mammu Khan, her close confidant. Then there was Maulavi Ahmadulla, who had played the most distinguished part in the siege of the Residency at Lakhnau. The other leaders such as Rambaksh, Behunath Singh, Chandabakhsh, Ghulab Sing, Narpat Singh, Bhopal Singh, and Firoz Shah, were scattered over the province, never staying long at the same place, though they held some strong fortified places as their

citadels. On the other hand, the British rule had almost completely disappeared from Rohilkhand for nearly a year. The main question for the British authorities now to decide was whether the subjugation of Rohilkhand or Awadh should take the priority in the programme of the next military campaign. Sir Colin himself desired to take up Awadh first. But Canning decided otherwise. So Sir Colin contented himself with merely sending a detachment against the two rebel groups assembled under the leadership of the Begam of Awadh and Maulavi Ahmadulla.

After the fall of Lakhnau, the Maulavi had taken up his position at Bari, 29 miles from that city, while the Begam with six thousand followers went to Bithauli. The Maulavi formed a very skilful plan to defeat the British force sent against him by Sir Colin, but it was foiled by the indiscretion of his cavalry, and he was forced to retreat. The Begam left her post without any fight as soon as the British force advanced

Sir Colin made an elaborate plan for the reconquest of Rohilkhand Three columns advanced upon the country from the north-west, south-west, and south-east, and Sir Colin himself left Lakhnau on 7 April. All these columns were to converge on Bareilly.

The first notable incident in the campaign was the heroic resistance offered by Narpat Singh of Ruya, fifty-one miles north-west of Lakhnau, with disastrous consequences to the British. Walpole, marching from Lakhnau, met with no opposition for eight days, till he arrived near this fort. The wall of this fort was very high on the side nearest to him but it was so low on the other side that one could have easily jumped over it Without making any proper reconaissance Walpole attacked the near side of the fort His infantry, decimated by a heavy fire, had to retreat, and more than a hundred men were killed, including Col. Adrian Hope. But though Narpat Singh achieved the reputation of "beating back the best-equipped movable column in India", he knew his own weakness and fled during the night

The most distinguished leader of the rebels in Rohilkhand was Khan Bahadur Khan of Bareilly, mentioned above Bareilly occupied an important position, and Sir Colin reached the city on May 4. Though surrounded by the enemy in all directions, Khan Bahadur Khan made a brave stand A fierce battle took place the next day, but though he was defeated, his men gave a good account of themselves Particularly notable were the two heroic charges, one by a body of "grizzly-bearded Ghazees" armed with sabres, one of whom nearly succeeded in killing Campbell, and the other by a band of white-clad sowars. The latter had attacked the baggage train of

the British in the rear, and threw into confusion the whole body of the camp followers, who fled pell mell in all directions. After six hours' severe fighting the British gained a complete victory and occupied Bareilly the next day (May 6). Khan Bahadur Khan effected his escape with the greater part of his army, and continued his resistance against the English.

While Colin was proceeding against Bareilly, Maulavi Ahmadulla marched with a strong force against Shahjahanpur, which was left in charge of a small detachment. The Maulavi was joined on the way by the Raja of Mohamdi and Mian Sahib, one of the Chiefs of Lakhnau, "each at the head of a considerable body of armed men, most of them mounted". He reached Shahjahanpur on May 3, 1858, with nearly eight thousand cavalry, and found the small English force entrenched within the jail enclosure. For more than a week the Maulavi bombarded the position with his eight guns, but could not capture it. Colin, on hearing the news, sent a force to its relief. The Maulavi disputed its passage across a river, but failed. He was forced to raise the blockade of the British entrenchment, but still remained at large with his force intact, and joined by a large body of rebels from the neighbouring areas, including the Begam, Firoz Shah, and some followers of Nana Sahib. Sir Colin himself marched to Shahjahanpur and defeated the Maulavi, who, however, eluded his grasp, and, nothing daunted, raided another station named Pallee. He had assumed the title of the King of Hindusthan and inspired so much terror by his activities, that the Governor-General offered a reward of fifty thousand Rupees to any one who could arrest him. On June 5 the Maulavi went to Powain on the Awadh-Rohilkhand border, a few miles from Shahjahanpur, but the Raja of this place shut his gate against him. He had a parley with the Raja who stood on the rampart, but unable to win him over, decided to break open the gate. The door was already tottering and creaking, when the Raja's followers fired a volley and shot the Maulavi dead. The Raja immediately cut off his head and himself carried it on an elephant to the Magistrate of Shahjahanpur, who stuck it up on the Kotwali. Thus ended the career of one of the greatest patriots and leaders of the revolution of 1857, though he was not really regarded as such, either by the contemporary Indians or their successors.

After finishing the campaign in Rohilkhand, Sir Colin Campbell proceeded to the more arduous task of subduing Awadh. There were three distinct categories of rebels, viz., (1) the mutinous sepoys; (2) the troops under the Begam; and (3) the Talukdars and Chiefs, and their retainers. The sepoys, however, gradually receded into the

background, and the struggle was chiefly maintained by the Talukdars. Their spirit of resistance received a stimulus by the Proclamation of Canning, dated March 20, 1858, but actually issued after the fall of Lakhnau, in which they had read their own doom. "That proclamation professed to confiscate the whole proprietary right in the soil of Oudh, save in the case of six comparatively inferior chiefs. To rebel landowners who should at once surrender to the Government, immunity from death and imprisonment was promised, provided only they could show they were guiltless of unprovoked bloodshed".[26]

The effect of this proclamation could be easily foreseen. Even Sir James Outram, the Chief Commissioner of Awadh, protested against it. "He expressed his conviction that as soon as the proclamation should be made public nearly all the chiefs and Talukdars would retire to their domains and prepare for a desperate resistance. ..They would be converted into relentless enemies if their lands were confiscated, maintaining a guerilla war...but that if their lands were insured to them they would at once aid in restoring order".[27] Canning stuck to his policy, but the prediction of Outram proved to be true. The Talukdars, faced with ruin, adopted an attitude of stiff resistance, and some of them fought with heroic courage.

By the end of September, 1858, the relative position of the British and the rebels in Awadh was somewhat as follows. The British "held a belt of country right across the centre of the province, from east to west; while districts north and south of that belt were either held by the rebels or were greatly troubled by them. North of the belt were the Begam (of Awadh), Mammu Khan, Firoz Shah, Hardat Singh, and leaders less notorious, with their followers; south of it were Beni Madho, Hanumant Singh, Harichand, and others. Besides these, in the north-eastern corner of the province, near the Nepal frontier, Nana Sahib and his adherents were believed to rest"[28] It is not possible to describe in detail the prolonged and obstinate resistance offered by them, singly or in groups, and a few examples must suffice Devi Buksh, the Raja of Gonda, organized the Rajput clans on the left of the Gogra and put up a stiff resistance. A number of clansmen gathered under the able chief, Beni Madho, mentioned above, who, like Tantia Topi, avoided any serious engagement, and adopted the tactics of a guerilla warfare. His followers, numbering about 80,000, chiefly matchlock-men, were scattered over a wide area of which they knew every inch of ground. They made surprise attacks on small units of British troops, wherever they found any opportunity, and retreated before strong enemy forces without offering any battle. By means of these skirmishes

they ceaselessly harassed the British troops, but always eluded them. Ghulam Hussain, who commanded a rebel force of three thousand men, one-third of whom were trained sepoys, with two guns, threatened Jaunpur. Muhammad Husain fought several times with the British at Amroha and Hariah. Lal Madho Singh hurled defiance at the British from his fort at Amethi, "seven miles in circumference, composed of mud walls and surrounded by a jungle". Another leader named Nizam Ali Khan, with a considerable following, in concert with Ali Khan Mewati, threatened Pilbhit. Then there were Khan Bahadur Khan of Bareilly with about four thousand followers, the Nawab of Farrukhabad with five thousand, and Wilayat Shah with three thousand, still at large.

The rebel Talukdars and Chiefs not only fought with the British, but had to fight against members of their own class. Many of them strongly resented the conduct of the Raja of Powain towards Ahmadulla, related above, and took arms to punish him. But the Raja was saved by their disunion and the timely arrival of the British help. Babu Ramprasad Singh, a Talukdar of Saraon, who showed sympathy towards the British, was attacked by a confederate group of rebels, who burned his house, sacked the town, and took him and his family prisoners. Raja Mansingh of Shahgunj in Fyzabad Division, who was at one time believed to be an arch-rebel and put under arrest, had thrown in his lot with the British. For this a large rebel force, 20,000 strong with twenty guns,attacked his fort but dispersed on the arrival of the British.[29]

In spite of determined and heroic resistance, the people or Talukdars of Awadh could never hope to succeed against the British, after the latter had practically suppressed the armed rebellion everywhere else. But although many rebel bands were defeated and many Talukdars offered their submission, the spirit of the rebellion was as strong as ever, thanks mainly to Canning's Proclamation.

As soon as the cessation of rain, early in October, made military operations practicable, the Awadh Chiefs took the offensive. On October 3, Harichand with six thousand men and eight guns crossed the Gumti and, being joined by several Zamindars with an additional force of six thousand men and four guns, arrived within three miles of Sandela. The rebels were, however, defeated in several engagements and both sides suffered heavy casualties. Several other isolated rebel forces were also defeated. These were merely preliminary contests before Sir Colin Campbell, now Lord Clyde, began his regular Awadh campaign. His plan was to encircle the rebel troops by sending columns from the west, south and east, and thus push them towards the Nepal frontier. He wanted to seize the strong-

holds of the powerful Chiefs, mostly Rajputs, one by one. Having reduced Rampur Kasia, the headquarters of the Khanpuria clan under Ram Ghulam Singh (November 3, 1858), he attacked Lal Madho Singh, Raja of Amethi. He had protected British fugitives at the beginning of the Mutiny and even personally escorted them to Allahabad. Later, he joined the rebel force. Lord Clyde asked him to submit, but he had no control over the rebel force within his fort. So he stealthily left the fort and presented himself before Lord Clyde (November 10). Some other rebels also followed his example. Far different was, however, the attitude of Beni Madho, the Baiswara Rajput Chief of Shankarpur, who was next attacked by Lord Clyde. Shankarpur, the stronghold of Beni Madho, eight miles in circumference, was besieged by British troops. When asked to surrender, Beni Madho refused to do so, saying that he would evacuate the fort but not surrender his person, as he was a subject of the Nawab of Awadh, and not of the British Government. He actually left the fort with 15,000 followers and several guns. Though pursued by three armies, and defeated in several engagements, he always succeeded in effecting his escape.[30]

But although some of the rebel Chiefs eluded his grasp, the campaign of Sir Colin Campbell was a complete success. By winning battle after battle and demolishing fort after fort, he recovered the whole province An idea of the severity and difficult nature of the campaign would appear from the fact that "1572 forts had to be destroyed, and 714 cannon, excluding those taken in action, were recovered".[31]

"Beni Madho, Devi Baksh, Muhammad Hasan, Mehndi Hasan, Amar Singh, Khan Bahadur Khan, Begam Hazrat Mahal, Mammu Khan, Nana Saheb, Bala Saheb, Jawala Prasad, with other prominent rebel leaders were driven out of their home districts and hemmed in a narrow region on the border of Nepal. It now remained to push them north into the inhospitable land of Jang Bahadur".[32] Lord Clyde pursued Nana Sahib and Begam of Awadh to Bahraich and other places till they crossed the border and entered Nepal. Many other rebel leaders, before following their example, offered the last fight at Banki, on the banks of the Rapti, on December 30, 1858. After their defeat at Banki, Nawab Tafazzal Husain of Farrukhabad, Mehndi Hasan, and a number of other leading rebel Chiefs with their followers surrendered to the British. Others entered Nepal. Some of them perished in the swamps and hills of the Terai, and some threw away their arms and stole back to their homes. Some, in desperate mood, rushed back into Awadh and were again defeated and forced back into the pestilential hills and jungles of Nepal. Among

these were Nana Sahib and his brother Bala Rao. Lord Clyde, with his task accomplished, returned to Lakhnau on January 18, 1859.

It now remains to describe two other principal military operations, not altogether unconnected with those described above. The first is a sort of roving campaign by Kunwar Singh extending over wide areas, while the second is confined to the south of the Ganga and the Yamuna, and concerns chiefly Bundelkhand and neighbouring regions of Central India.

Mention has been made above[33] how Kunwar Singh had to leave his homeland and retire towards Sasaram. After some desultory movements he marched towards the west and passed through Rohtas, Mirzapur, Rewa and Banda. The details of his activities during this long journey are not known with certainty, but it appears that his presence at different localities on the way gave a definite momentum to the revolutionary feelings of the civil population and led to some depredations on their part. The line of his advance shows that he planned to join the revolutionary forces in Central India. From Banda Kunwar proceeded to Kalpi and, according to a previous arrangement, was joined there by the mutinous sepoys from Gwalior. According to the statement of Nishan Singh,[34] an important lieutenant of Kunwar, even 'Nana Rao', meaning probably either Nana Sahib or his brother Bala Rao, joined this group. The combined troops offered battle at Kandhapur,[35] but were defeated by the superior British force. The subsequent movements of Kunwar Singh are thus described by Nishan Singh: "Then Kunwar Singh fled to Lucknow and he was presented a robe of honour by the Shah of Oudh. The Shah of Oudh also gave a *Firman* for the district of Azamgarh, as well as twelve thousand Rupees in cash for expenses. A cheque (hundi) of Rupees sixteen thousand was also given to be realised from Raja Man Singh". These statements are not corroborated from any other source, but they gain some support from the fact that Kunwar Singh certainly proceeded towards Azamgarh.[36]

About this time the large concentration of British troops at or near Lakhnau had left Eastern Awadh comparatively unguarded, and a strong rebel force, 14,000 strong, including 2500 sepoys, entrenched themselves at Belwas, a fortified camp near the town of Amorha, 9 miles to the east of Fyzabad. The rebel forces consisted of several groups. The most important of these was the one led by Mehndi Hasan, who called himself Nazim of Sultanpur and had under him about fifteen thousand men. His headquarters were at Chanda, 36 miles from Jaunpur on the direct road from that place to Sultanpur. His forces had already fought with the British and suffered reverses at Saraon, 14 miles north of Allahabad, and also

at Chanda, which fell into their hands. The Nazim was himself defeated at Sultanpur (February 23, 1858), but escaped with his forces. He was now joined by the Rajas of Gonda and Chardah, several other Chiefs, and about 2500 sepoys of various British regiments. When a British detachment was sent against them, they took the offensive and attacked the British camp on March 5, 1858. After a severe engagement, in which the sepoys fought with great courage and determination, they were defeated and were forced to fall back on their entrenched camp. The British force was unable to storm this position, and a considerable part of this rebel force marched to the south-east. It was joined by many other rebel groups on the way, till it reached Atraulia, and effected a junction with the troops of Kunwar Singh (March 17 or 18).[37]

Col. Milman, who was encamped near Azamgarh, proceeded against this rebel force, but being defeated by Kunwar Singh, retreated to his camp. But not being able to hold out there, he continued his retreat to Azamgarh, and sent off expresses to Varanasi (Banaras), Allahabad and Lakhnau (Lucknow) for assistance (March 22). On March 26, Kunwar Singh occupied Azamgarh and blockaded the entrenchment of the British troops. These, reinforced from Varanasi and Ghazipur, attempted a sortie on the 27th, but being repulsed, retreated within the entrenchment and remained on the defensive. Lord Canning, who was then at Allahabad, realizing the gravity of the situation, sent a strong force under Lord Mark Keer. On April 6, after a severe engagement, he effected a junction with the British force at Azamgarh. But Kunwar Singh maintained his position till April 15, when further reinforcement of British troops from Lakhnau, consisting of three regiments of European Infantry, seven hundred Sikh Cavalry, and eighteen guns, appeared on the other side of the river Tons which flows by Azamgarh. There was nothing left for Kunwar but to escape, and this he did by a brilliant manoeuvre. Leaving part of his troops to oppose the crossing of the river by the relieving force, he marched with the rest of his troops towards the south. Flying before one column closely pursuing him, and eluding another which was sent to the borders of Bihar to cut off his retreat, he crossed the Ganga at Sheopur with the British troops at his heels. The troops of Kunwar Singh crossed the river two to four miles west of Sheopur, and he arrived with them to his native village Jagdishpur on April 22. Here he was joined by his brother, Amar Singh, who had been hitherto carrying on a guerilla warfare,[38] with several thousands of armed villagers. Next day Kunwar was attacked by a detachment of British troops from Arrah led by Le Grand. Kunwar Singh's troops were posted

in a jungle near Jagdishpur, and Le Grand, after some cannonading, ordered a charge by the infantry. But the British were forced to retreat and the retreat was soon converted to a rout. It was a veritable disaster. Two-thirds of the British force, including the commander, were killed, and the rest fled back to Arrah. But this was the last great victory of the old veteran. Three days later Kunwar Singh died at his own house at Jagdishpur. He had been hit by a cannon ball and his right wrist was amputated immediately after his arrival at Jagdishpur. Evidently this brought about the end on 9 May, 1858.

After the death of Kunwar Singh his brother Amar Singh made an attack upon Arrah, but being repulsed, continued the guerilla warfare till the end of November, 1858.[39] An important document, recenly discovered, supplies very interesting information about the early activities of Amar Singh. It is a statement of a sepoy who had mutinied and was in the service of Amar Singh for six months till his (the sepoy's) arrest on October 25, 1858. "According to his statement Amar Singh had retreated to the hills along with 400 cavalrymen and six guns. These guns were manufactured by a mechanic brought from Calcutta, who stayed with Amar Singh till his arrest. Cannon balls were also manufactured at Jagdishpur out of a huge quantity of lead seized from the English boats on the Ganges. A regular training was also given to the new recruits at Jagdishpur. As to the future intentions of Amar Singh the statement says that he planned to join Nana Rao at Kalpi."[40]

In Bundelkhand, as in Awadh and Rohilkhand, the mutiny of the sepoys was followed by rebellion of Chiefs and people, as mentioned above. The popular outbreaks, however, were not so serious or sustained as in the northern provinces. Among the rebellious Chiefs also, only one, the Rani of Jhansi, played any really important part. But still the situation in Central India was rendered serious to the British by the fact that it was the scene of operations of the three great military leaders of the Revolt, viz., Tantia Topi, Rani Lakhsmibai of Jhansi, and, though partly, of Kunwar Singh.

There is no evidence to show that the Rani of Jhansi had any hand in the mutiny of sepoys at Jhansi, early in June, 1857. Nevertheless, for reasons discussed above,[41] she was forced to take up a definitely hostile attitude towards the British at a later stage. Another chief, the Nawab of Banda, had a similar history.[42] Besides, there were several localities where the mutinous or rebellious spirit continued unchecked for a long time, as the hands of the British Government were too full with more serious outbreaks in the north.

It was not till towards the end of the year 1857 that a regular plan was drawn up for the campaign in Central India. According to this plan, a Bombay column under Sir Hugh Rose, consisting of two brigades, would start from Sehore and Mhow, and proceed by way of Jhansi to Kalpi on the Yamuna; while another column from Madras, under Whitlock, starting from Jubbulpur, would march across Bundelkhand to Banda. It was intended that these two columns should form part of a general combination, and support each other.

Rose left Mhow on January 6, 1858. He opened the campaign by reducing the fort of Rathgarh and defeating the troops of the rebellious Raja of Banpur who had come to its aid. He then advanced unopposed to Saugor, where "the villagers, who had been mercilessly robbed by the rebels, assembled in thousands to welcome him". After reducing Gurrakotta and a few other forts, which were in possession of mutineers and rebels, he arrived with one brigade before Jhansi on March 21, 1858. The same night, the other brigade under Brigadier Stuart, after capturing Chanderi, joined him.

As soon as the Rani of Jhansi had decided to fight the British, she began to recruit troops, and applied for help to Tantia Topi. The latter, as noted above,[43] had been defeated at Kanpur on December 6, 1857. He then got orders from the Rao Sahib to proceed to Kalpi and take charge of the small force and magazine left there. On arriving at Kalpi he received orders from the Nana to go and attack Chirkari. After a fight of eleven days he captured Chirkari and took twenty-four guns and three lakhs of Rupees from the Raja. The Rajas of Banpur and Shahgarh, Dewan Despat and Daolat Singh, the Kuchwaya Kharwala, and a great gathering of people joined him there and Tantia organized "the army of the Peshwa", estimated at 20,000 or 25,000 men with 20 or 30 guns.[44] At this time he received an appeal from the Rani of Jhansi to come to her aid. He referred the matter to the Rao Sahib and, with his permission, proceeded to Jhansi.

The garrison of Jhansi comprised about ten thousand Bundelas and Velaities, and fifteen hundred sepoys, while the force under the command of Rose consisted of only two brigades of about two thousand men. Notwithstanding the smallness of his force Rose invested the city and the fort with his cavalry on 22 March and commenced bombarding them with his batteries on the 25th. But, in spite of the heavy bombardment and the incessant galling fire from the British infantry, the besieged, under inspiring guidance of the Rani, offered a gallant resistance. "Their guns never ceased firing except at night. Even women were seen working in the batteries, and distributing ammunition".[45] But in spite of their heroic courage the heavy

bombardment battered down the parapets of the mound bastion and silenced its guns on the 29th March, and next day there was a breach in the city wall.

At this critical moment Tantia Topi arrived at the outskirts of Jhansi with 22,000 men, mostly of Gwalior Contingent (March 31). The situation was one of great peril for Rose, but he decided to continue the siege, and fight with Tantia with a portion of his army. By a brilliant manoeuvre, with only fifteen hundred men, he completely defeated the host of Tantia who fled towards Kalpi (April 1, 1858). Two days later Rose took the city of Jhansi by assault, though it was defended with grim determination till the last. The Rani left the fort with a few attendants on the night of the 4th April, and on the 6th the battle was over.

The Rani joined Tantia at Kalpi, and Rose, leaving a small garrison at Jhansi, marched towards that city. On the way, he was met by the Rani and Tantia at a town called Koonch. Though they were helped by several disaffected chiefs and occupied a very strong position, they were severely defeated by Rose. Tantia went home,[46] and the rest, falling back upon Kalpi, quarrelled among themselves, each section of the army accusing the other for the defeat. The consequent demoralization was so great that as soon as the news reached Kalpi that Rose was marching upon that city, all the rebels dispersed in different directions. At this juncture the Nawab of Banda, who had been defeated by Whitlock, arrived at Kalpi with two thousand horse, some guns, and many followers. With utmost exertions the Rani of Jhansi and the Nawab of Banda succeeded in inducing the sepoys and other rebel groups to return to Kalpi and make a supreme effort to redeem their position. A considerable section of the people in the neighbourhood aided their efforts. Rao Sahib, a nephew of Nana, also was at Kalpi.

The fort of Kalpi was situated on a steep and lofty rock on the southern bank of the Yamuna, protected by chains of ravines on all the three sides other than the river. A line of entrenchments was added to strengthen the fortifications, and, by way of further precautions, the Kalpi Road, by which the British were to advance, was fortified. The Commander-in-Chief, who fully realized the gravity of the situation and the great importance of restoring British authority in Central India which was seriously threatened by the Rani and Tantia, sent a detachment under Maxwell to the aid of Rose. It took up a position on the northern bank of the Yamuna, opposite a village called Golauli. As soon as Rose heard of this, he marched direct to that village, thereby turning the fortifications on the road. On May 22, Rose was attacked by the rebels, but they were com-

pletely defeated. Next day when the British advanced through the ravines to Kalpi, they found that the enemy had fled and the city was almost completely deserted.

Rao Sahib and the Rani of Jhansi fled to Gopalpur, about 46 miles south-west of Gwalior. There they were joined by Tantia Topi. Their position was now desperate in the extreme, but it is only at such a crisis that latent genius sometimes asserts itself. They now conceived the very daring plan of seizing Gwalior by winning over the troops of Sindhia. Which of the three Maratha leaders originally suggested the plan, it is difficult to say. We may leave out of account Rao Sahib, who never distinguished himself in any way, and whose leadership and political importance rested solely on his relationship with Nana. Of the other two, Tantia Topi never claimed the credit, even when he had an opportunity of doing so in the circumstantial account he himself gave of his own military activities. In all probability, therefore, the grand plan was conceived by the Rani of Jhansi.[47] But whoever may be the author of the plan, it was a masterstroke of high strategy. With Gwalior in their hands the rebels would be able to cut off the direct communications of the British in North India with Bombay, while they would have a brilliant opportunity of rallying the whole Maratha country in the south against the British. A British historian has described the idea to be "as original and as daring as that which prompted the memorable seizure of Arcot".[48]

Daring the plan undoubtedly was. The rebels had no resources to carry out the task in the ordinary way. But they counted on the mutinous instincts of the Gwalior army and took the risk. With the shattered remnants of their force the three leaders arrived before Gwalior on May 30, 1858. On June 1, Sindhia marched out with his army to oppose them. What followed is thus described in official history: "As they (rebels) approached, Sindhia's eight guns opened on them. But the smoke of the discharge had scarcely disappeared when the rebel skirmishers closed to their flanks, and two thousand horsemen, charging at a gallop, carried the guns. Simultaneously with their charge, Sindhia's infantry and cavalry, his bodyguards alone excepted, either joined the rebels or took up a position indicative of their intention not to fight. . . Sindhia turned and fled, accompanied by a very few of the survivors (of the bodyguards). He did not draw rein till he reached Agra".[49] There can be hardly any doubt that the army of Sindhia was won over by secret negotiations,[50] though we shall probably never know the exact details. The three leaders—Rao Sahib, Rani of Jhansi and Tantia—entered the fort of

Gwalior, seized the treasury and the arsenal, and proclaimed Nana Sahib as Peshwa.

The seizure of Gwalior "created a sensation throughout India only equalled by that which was caused by the first mutinies".[51] Sir Hugh Rose regarded his Central Indian campaign as over after the battle of Golauli, and had already issued his farewell order to the troops. But he fully realized the gravity of the situation caused by the fall of Gwalior, and immediately drew up a comprehensive plan to retake that fort and totally exterminate the rebels in that area. He left Kalpi on June 6 and, advancing by forced marches, arrived on the 16th within five miles of the Morar cantonments, near Gwalior, which were guarded by the rebel troops. He immediately attacked them and carried the cantonments by assault. Thus he regained the mastery of the road to Agra, and this enabled the brigade under Smith to reach Kotah-ke-serai, about four miles to the south-east of Gwalior.

We do not possess any reliable account of the activities of the rebel leaders during the fortnight following their capture of Gwalior. The proclamation of Nana as Peshwa was followed by an installation ceremony in which Rao Sahib, richly dressed and wearing the palace jewels, deputised for him as his viceroy. There were great jubilations, and the feeding of Brahmans and other ceremonies were held with great eclat[52] It appears, however, that neither Rao Sahib, nor Tantia Topi who took his orders from him as the deputy of Nana, did show much regard for the Rani of Jhansi who, according to some accounts, was deliberately ignored. It is also reported that the newly won Gwalior troops were also similarly ignored, and consequently lost heart in the cause and the leadership of Tantia. Probably, though we do not know it for certain, the Rani alone protested against these ceremonies and wasting time and money which should have been devoted to consolidating their resources against the British attack. But in any case it appears that there was no military preparation to oppose the British forces till they arrived within a few miles of Gwalior, from different directions, and occupied the two strategic positions of Morar and Kotah-ke-serai. According to the acoount, referred to above, it was not till the very end, when the British troops were almost at their door, that Tantia, finding the soldiers unwilling to follow his lead, made an appeal to the Rani to save the situation.[53] It was, however, too late, but still the Rani again took up the lead and made preparations for the war. She herself led the troops and took up her position on the range of hills between Gwalior and Kotah-ke-serai, which had been occupied by Smith. Smith immediately attacked this force

which barred his approach to Gwalior, but met with a stiff resistance. The different versions of this battle slightly vary in matters of detail, but the following account in the British official history may be regarded as fairly correct: "Clad in the attire of a man and mounted on horseback, the Rani of Jhansi might have been seen animating her troops throughout the day. When inch by inch the British troops pressed through the pass, and when reaching its summit Smith ordered the hussars to charge, the Rani of Jhansi boldly fronted the British horsemen. When her comrades failed her, her horse, in spite of her efforts, carried her along with the others. With them she might have escaped but that her horse, crossing the canal near the (Phulbagh) cantonment, stumbled and fell. A hussar, close upon her track, ignorant of her sex and rank, cut her down. She fell to rise no more".[54] According to another account the Rani was struck by a bullet.[55] Thus died the Rani of Jhansi, and Sir Hugh Rose, the Commander of the British army against which she fought from the beginning to end, paid her a well-deserved tribute when he referred to her as "the best and bravest military leader of the rebels".[56]

Next day, June 18, Rose joined Smith, but it was not till the 19th morning that the main body of troops came out of the Gwalior fort to attack him. Rose immediately attacked them, and after a short but sharp engagement, drove away the rebels and occupied the city.

Next morning, June 20, after making arrangements for the pursuit of the flying rebels, with Tantia among them, Rose attacked the strong fortress and carried it by assault. On that very day Sindhia re-entered his capital, and according to official accounts, "the streets through which he passed were thronged by thousands of citizens, who greeted him with enthusiastic acclamations". According to the same accounts, only twenty-one were killed and sixty-six wounded on the British side during the five days' operations before Gwalior [57]

The pursuing column overtook the flying rebel army at Jowra Alipur on June 22. There was hardly any resistance. "In a few minutes all was over. Between three and four hundred of the rebels were slain; and Tantia Topi and Rao Sahib, leaving all their guns on the field of battle, fled across the Chambal into Rajputana".[58] Passing through the Tonk and Boondi Hills Tantia was overtaken on the Banas river near Kankrauli. But after a short skirmish Tantia fled. Although pursued by several detachments, he crossed the Chambal and marched direct to Jhalrapatan, the capital of a native State. There he levied a "contribution of sixty thousand pounds on the inhabitants, collected forty thousand more from the Government property, seized thirty guns and enlisted a large number of fresh

troops".[59] In the beginning of September Tantia left the place at the head of nine thousand men for Indore. He was caught by one of the pursuing columns, consisting of only 1300 men, but he fled with his eight thousand, leaving thirty guns behind. After being overtaken and managing to escape several times during the next month, Tantia crossed the Narmada about forty miles north-east of Hoshangabad and probably wanted to move south across the Tapti. But being foiled in this attempt, he proceeded westward and re-crossed the Narmada beyond Rajur. Being defeated at Choto Udaipur, he took shelter in the dense forests of Banswara. About this time he heard that Prince Firoz Shah[60] had marched from Awadh to join him. Though Tantia was surrounded on all sides, he rushed out of the jungle through a pass at Partabgarh, in the face of a small British detachment, and joined Firoz Shah at Indargarh. But throughout the pursuit, his followers deserted him in such numbers that the combined army now amounted to only two thousand men, almost in a destitute condition. Even in this condition he evaded the several pursuing detachments by rapidlly moving about from the centre of Malwa to the northern extremity of Rajputana. At last, worn out with fatigue and thoroughly disheartened, he crossed the Chambal and hid himself in the jungles near Seronge which belonged to Man Singh, a feudatory of Sindhia. Being deprived of his estate by the latter, Man Singh had rebelled, but was defeated by a British detachment. He was wandering in the forest when he chanced to meet Tantia, and the two became very friendly. As soon as the British Commander came to know of this, he won over Man Singh by holding out the hope of restoring his wealth and position. Man Singh not only surrendered, but led a few sepoys of the British detachment to the hiding place of Tantia Topi. The sepoys found Tantia asleep, seized him, and carried him to the British camp at Sipri. He was tried by a court martial on April 15, 1859, and was hanged on the 18th in the presence of a large crowd.

The capture of Tantia was the last important act in the suppression of the revolt in Central India. The wonderful guerilla warfare which he had carried on for ten months against enormous odds elicited admiration even from his opponents,[61] and may be looked upon as a fitting end to a struggle which was hopeless almost from the very beginning.

Before concluding this chapter it is but proper to make a reference to the fate of the principal leaders. Among those who surrendered, persons originally belonging to Awadh received a specially favourable treatment. A typical instance may be noted. Mehndi Hasan and the Nawab of Farrukhabad, as mentioned above, surren-

dered together on the 7th January, 1859. The latter was condemned to death, but his life was spared according to the promise made at the time of his surrender. Mehndi Hasan, who was an official of Awadh before its annexation, was granted a pension of Rs. 200 per mensem, but was not permitted to return home.

Syed Muhammad Hasan, the rebel Nazim of Gorakhpur, refused to submit and take advantage of the Queen's Proclamation, when asked to do so; on the other hand he justified his own conduct on the ground that he fought for religion and his sovereign. Nevertheless, when he was ultimately persuaded to submit, he was granted an allowance of Rs. 200 and directed to live in the District of Sitapur.

The underlying principle seems to be that as Awadh was a very recent annexation, not by conquest, but on grounds whose propriety was doubted by many, an old subject of the king of Awadh who fought against the British was treated as an enemy engaged in legitimate war, rather than as a rebel against his government.

The Begam of Awadh endeavoured to come to an agreement with the British, but failed. On October 22, she sent vakeels to find out the terms she might expect, but the negotiations fell through. To the Queen's Proclamation of November to which reference will be made later, the Begam issued a reply in the name of her son,[62] in which she referred to many acts of injustice and bad faith on the part of the British Government In reply to the Queen's assurance that she did not want increase of territory, the Begam asked a very pertinent question: "Why does Her Majesty not restore our country to us when our people wish it?" Warning the people against the offer of amnesty by the Queen, the Awadh Proclamation observed: "No one has ever seen in a dream that the English forgave an offence". After this there was hardly any chance of reconciliation between the Begam and the British.

Nana Sahib also made an attempt to come to terms with the British. In his letter[63] to the British authorities, dated 20 April, 1859, Nana denied his complicity in the mutiny and disclaimed all responsibility for the murder of the British women and children, saying that "they were killed by your sepoys and Budmashes (scoundrels) at the time that my soldiers fled from Kanpur and my brother was wounded".

After referring to the Proclamation issued by the British Government, Nana says: "I have been fighting with you, and, while I live, will fight....You have forgiven the crimes of all...and I alone am left...We will meet. And then I will shed your blood and it

will flow knee-deep. I am prepared to die. Death will come to me one day, what then have I to fear?"

A reply to this letter was sent by Major J. F. Richardson on April 23, 1859. He reminded Nana that the Proclamation was intended for all, and that it was open to him to surrender on the identical terms under which the chiefs of Awadh laid down their arms and surrendered themselves, and if, as he said, he did not murder women and children, he could come in without fear.

Nana sent a reply to this letter from Deogarh on April 25, 1859. He said he was prepared to surrender "if a letter written by Her Majesty the Queen and sealed with her seal, and brought by the Commanding Officer of the French or the 2nd in command" reach him. Otherwise, said be "why should I join you, knowing all the *dagabazi* perpetrated by you in Hindoostan?".

The same day Richardson sent a reply. He cannot, he said, add anything to his letter, dated April 23. He advised Nana to study the Proclamation, and concluded as follows: "Send any responsible party to me, and I guarantee him safe conduct to and fro, and I will explain any part you may be in doubt on. Your messenger shall be treated with consideration. More I cannot do.".

Evidently the correspondence led to no settlement. Bala Sahib, who joined his elder brother Nana in his flight to Nepal, also sent a petition to the British authorities. He was less defiant than Nana, and in a way made Nana responsible for his own part in the rebellion. "The sepoys", he said, "would not allow me to leave them, my brother would not permit me to separate from him. I was therefore necessitated to act according to my brother's orders." Bala also mentioned how he saved the life of the daughter of the Judge of Fatehpur.[63a] But Bala's cringing attitude was no more helpful than the defiant challenge of Nana, whose last words to the English were: "Life must be given up some day. Why then should I die dishonoured? There will be war between me and you as long as I have life, whether I be killed or imprisoned or hanged, and whatever I do will be done with the sword only". This spirited challenge to the British is perhaps the only act in Nana's life that would raise his character in the estimation of posterity.

Strangely enough, both Nana and the Begam of Awadh put their faith on the rulers of Nepal even after the latter had actively helped the British in suppressing the revolt, as noted above.[63b] But even the piteous appeals (May, 1858) of the ex-king of Awadh to Jang Baha dur bore no fruit, and the latter curtly replied: "As the Hindus and Muhammadans have been guilty of ingratitude and perfidy, neither

the Nepal Government nor I can side with them".[64] Nevertheless, being pressed by Lord Clyde on all sides, both Nana and the Begam as well as some rebel leaders were forced to enter Nepal with their parties. Jang Bahadur declared as early as January, 1859, that he would not afford protection or shelter to the refugees from India.

"The Nepal Government employed their troops for the capture and expulsion of their uninvited guests. It was in such an encounter that Beni Madho, Dabir Jang Bahadur, the popular hero of Shankarpur, met with his death. Unwilling to surrender, he fought the Gurkha troops in the Dang valley and died with many of his troops. His brother Jograj Singh was also killed on this occasion. His surviving brother, widow and son were in Nepal till December, 1859. The boy was thirteen or fourteen years of age at the time of his father's death. He was granted an estate with an income of 6,000 rupees per year and was sent to Sitapur for his education. Nawab Mammu Khan, Khan Bahadur Khan and Brigadier Jawala Prasad with others of less note were delivered to the British authorities. Raja Devi Baksh of Gonda, Harprasad, Chakladar of Khairabad, Golab Singh of Biswa died in Nepal under what circumstances we do not know. Hardat Singh of Bundi was killed. Azimullah, Nana's friend, died at Bhutwal some time in October".[65]

But evidently Jang Bahadur of Nepal showed a sympathetic attitude towards the fugitives of the two princely families of Awadh and Bithur. Birjis Qadr was given shelter at Chitwan.[66] Nana Sahib and his family spent their last days in Nepal. In reply to the request of the British to capture and surrender Nana, Jang Bahadur flatly denied any knowledge of Nana being in Nepal and even sportingly made an offer to the British to send their own men to Nepal to find out the whereabouts of Nana. There is, however, no doubt that both Nana Sahib and Bala Sahib lived and died in Nepal, and it is difficult to believe that Nana could roam at large in Nepal for years, save at the connivance, if not the active help, of the authorities in Nepal. Certain it is that the widows of Baji Rao, Nana, and Bala spent their last days in Nepal. Even the worst tragedy has sometimes a comic phase. It was afforded in the present case by rumours and even official reports, recurring at intervals, throughout the nineteenth and the first quarter of the twentieth century, of Nana being found in India. Several persons were even arrested as Nana and then released. But these created such an excitement that at last the Government of India came to the wise decision that even if the real Nana were found in India, he should be ignored rather than arrested.

1. Holmes, 63, f. n. But Lord Roberts gives the number, respectively, as 257,000 and 36,000 (Roberts—II, 434.)

2. Holmes, 208.
3. Kaye—I, II. 216-7.
4. Kaye—I, II. 228, Holmes, 212-3.
5. *SB*—II. 90.
6. Sen, 155.
7. Sen, 154.
8. Holmes, 221.
9. Ibid, 281.
10. See p. 488.
11. Kaye—I, II. 670; Majumdar. 133-4, 289, f. n., 20.
12. Kaye—I, II. 390.
13. Holmes, 117.
14. Ibid.
15. Sen, 82.
16. Ibid.
17. Ibid.
18. The sepoys, as noted below, made an attempt to intercept the siege train sent from the Panjāb under the escort of a weak native detachment, but not till it had reached the neighbourhood of Delhi, where it could be protected by the British forces besieging that city.
19 Although the dread of mass conversion to Christianity was an important cause of the Mutiny, the religious question seems to have gradually receded into the background (cf. Ahsanulla's evidence at the trial of Bahadur Shah).
20. For different views on the subject, cf. Kaye—I. III. 645; Malleson, II. 75; Holmes, 384-5.
21. Holmes, 387.
22. See p. 563.
23. Holmes, 294.
24 See above, p. 543.
25. According to Forbes-Mitchell, there were 70,000 irregular and 60,000 regular mutineers (*Reminiscences*, 195). According to Maude, the number gradually swelled to over 100,000 (*Memories*, II. 449).
26. Malleson, II. 409.
27. Malleson, III. 251. The Proclamation was also disapproved by Lord Ellenborough, the President of the Board of Control. For the controversy over the Proclamation, cf. H.S. Cunningham, *Earl Canning*, pp. 156 ff.
28 Malleson, III. 285.
29. For a detailed account of these Talukdars, cf. Malleson, II. 469; III. 273-88.
30. For details, cf. Sen, 360-1.
31. Holmes, 523, f.n 1. Holmes adds that "the number of armed men, who succumbed in Oudh, was about 150,000 of whom at least 35,000 were sepoys".
32. Sen, 361.
33. See p. 551.
34. This was published in the *Patna University Journal*, No. VIII(1954), and has been summarised in *Freedom—Bihar*, 44 ff.
35. This evidently refers to the battle at Kanpur mentioned above (p. 568).
36. According to *Freedom—Bihar*, pp.46-7, Kunwar Singh proceeded to Awadh before the battle of Kanpur in November-December, 1857. But this does not appear to be very likely.
37. Malleson, II. 326 ff.; 452 ff.
38. For a detailed account, cf. *Freedom—Bihar*, pp. 37 ff.
39. For details, cf. *Freedom—Bihar*, pp. 51 ff. It appears that Amar Singh still maintained the semblance of a parallel government.
40. "Amar Singh was moving from place to place with unflagging energy to keep up the struggle. After the retreat of Nana Saheb into Nepal, he went to the Tarai region to assume the leadership of Nana's troops. But he was ultimately captured about the middle of December, 1859, by a force under Jang Bahadur". He died of dysentery in the Gorakhpur jail on 5 February, 1860. *Freedom—Bihar*, 58-9.
41. See p. 489.
42. For the outbreak at Banda, see above, p. 527. According to J.W. Sherer, a contemporary, the Nawab of Banda was practically forced to rebel (*Memories of the Mutiny*, I. 164), quoted in Holmes, 496 f.n.
43. See above, p. 568.
44. Forrest—II, IV. xcv.

45. Holmes, 511.
46. Tantia says in his statement: "I fled to Chirki which is four miles from Jalaur, and where my parents were." (Malleson, III. 518).
47. "Malleson attributes it entirely to the Rani. Holmes does not rule out Tantia, who did not lack either daring or originality. But if Macpherson was right, and he was supported by Sir Robert Hamilton, Tantia anticipated the evacuation of Kalpi by a visit to Gwalior. It was he who contacted the Sindhia's troops and their officers and convinced Rao Saheb that Gwalior would fall an easy prey to them" (Sen, 293). Cf. Holmes, 535, f.n. 1.
48. Holmes, 535.
49. Malleson, III. 209.
50. As noted in f. n. 47, Tantia had contacted the troops of Sindhia at Gwalior.
51. Report of Sir Hugh Rose (Forrest—II, IV. 130).
52. This is the popular account (Cf. Mahasveta Bhattacharya—*Jhansir Rani*, p. 279). But according to Forrest, "the Rao refused to assume any state" and "behaved with considerable tact" (Forrest—I, III. 265-6).
53. Mahasveta Bhattacharya, op. cit, p.286. She gives the popular version about the Rani of Jhansi's life at Gwalior (277 ff.) mentioned in this para, but cites no authority.
54 Malleson, III. 221.
55. This is the account by Sir Robert Hamilton. For details cf. Sen, 295. According to the account given by the Rani's servant, she was drinking *sherbet*, near the Phoolbagh batteries, when the alarm was given that Hussars were appproaching. "Forty or fifty of them came up, and the rebels fled, save about fifteen. The Ranee's horse refused to leap the canal when she received a shot in the side, and then a cut on the head, but rode off. She soon after fell dead, and was burnt in a garden close by" (Forrest—I, III. 281-2). This reconciles the discrepancy between the two accounts of Rani's death given above, and is most probably the correct version.
56. Holmes, 538.
57. *Calcutta Gazette*, January—June, 1859, Supplement, pp. 1-20 (quoted by Holmes, 540-1). Cf. Forrest—II, IV. 151.
58. Holmes, 541. The subsequent movement of Tantia, as given in the text, is based on the same authority. For Tantia's own statement, cf. Malleson, III 518-24, a summary of which is given in Majumdar, 159 ff.
59. Holmes, 544.
60. See pp. 492-3.
61. Malleson, G.B., *The Indian Mutiny of 1857*, p. 397.
62. Sen, 382-4.
63. For this letter and the subsequent correspondence, cf. Majumdar, xiii-xiv Sen, 392 ff.
63a. For the full text of the letter from Rao Sahib, cf Sen, 396-7.
63b See p. 570.
64. Sen, 359.
65. Sen, 368.
66. Ibid.

CHAPTER XIX.

ATROCITIES

An important feature of the great outbreak of 1857 is the perpetration of horrible deeds of cruelty on both sides. Indeed some of the acts were of so brutal a nature, that a writer has described it as a contest between two savage races, capable of no thought but that, regardless of all justice or mercy, their enemies should be exterminated.

Some English writers, who have the candour to admit that atrocities were committed on both sides, have expressed a wish that a veil should be drawn over them. But with a few honourable exceptions, the English writers and, following them, others have drawn the veil over the excesses of the British troops, but not over those of the Indian sepoys. As a result, while every schoolboy, both in India and England, reads of the cruel massacre of English men, women, and children at Kanpur, very few, outside the circle of historians of modern India, have any knowledge of the massacre, in cold blood, of Indian men, women, and children, hundred times the number of those that perished at Kanpur. Historical truth and political fair play both demand that the veil should be drawn aside, and an objective study made of the atrocities on both sides.

The first act of cruelty, animated by racial hatred, was the indiscriminate massacre of Englishmen at Mirat, where the people were stirred by one common impulse to slaughter all the *Feringhees*, sparing neither women nor children. It is alleged that helpless women were butchered without mercy, and children were slaughtered under the very eyes of their mothers. All this was done, not merely by the excited sepoys, but also by the prisoners released by them and the riff-raff of the population,—the gangs of plunderers and incendiaries who are to be found in every city. The excitement and confusion caused by the mutiny of soldiers were taken advantage of by the unruly elements who are always eager to seize such an opportunity.

When the sepoys of Mirat reached Delhi, the bloody scenes were repeated there, and a number of English men, women and children were done to death by the sepoys and others in cold blood. Here, too, the scum of the population vied with the sepoys in their savage fury, and a large number of European residents who were engaged in mercantile or other peaceful pursuits, were murdered. "Every house, occupied by European or Eurasian, was attacked, and every

Christian upon whom hands could be laid was killed. There was no mercy and there was no quarter".[1] Even when the first fury and excitement had subsided, fifty-two European prisoners,—men, women and children—who were kept in the custody of Ahsanulla, were killed with swords by the sepoys.

Mirat and Delhi set the tempo of the revolt, and indiscriminate massacre of English men, women and children marked the rising not only of sepoys, but even of the civil population, in many places. The massacre at Jhansi was of particularly heinous type, as noted above.

In some cases the tragedies enacted were of a ghastly character. A letter from Varanasi, dated June 16, 1857, describes the following scene witnessed by the writer at Allahabad. "A gang of upwards of two dozen sepoys...cut into two an infant boy of two or three years of age, while playing about his mother; next they hacked into pieces the lady; and while she was crying out of agonising pains for safety...felled, most shockingly and horridly, the husband."[2] Similar incidents happened at Bareilly as reported by a Bengali officer there.[3]

So far about the cruelty of the Indians towards the English, mostly narrated by the English themselves. We may now turn to the other picture. Unfortunately, the Indians have left no record of the atrocities to which they were subjected, and we might never have known the terrible ordeal through which they passed during those two eventful years. Fortunately for history, however, some Englishmen had sunk so low in the scale of humanity during that awful orgy of murder and rapine, that they not only felt no scruple in proclaiming their own misdeeds, but even took pride in them, as if they had done some heroic and chivalrous acts. Thus we find not only in official records and correspondence, but also in private letters and memoirs, a free and frank recital of the terrible and inhuman acts of violence perpetrated by men and officers of the British army.

General Neill, who proceeded from Calcutta in May, 1857, with a regiment, towards Varanasi (Banaras) and Allahabad, has earned undying notoriety for the inhuman cruelties which marked the progress of his army all along the way. It would be too hideous to describe the details, and a general account must suffice. This is given on the authority of Kaye, who had access to all his correspondence and official reports.

Neill gave written instructions to Major Renaud "to attack and destroy all places *en route* close to the road occupied by the enemy." "Certain guilty villages were marked out for destruction, and all the men inhabiting them were to be slaughtered. All sepoys of mutinous regiments not

giving a good account of themselves were to be hanged. The town of Fatepur, which had revolted, was to be attacked, and the Pathan quarters destroyed, with all their inhabitants." Renaud "pressed on, proud of his commission, and eager to do the bidding of his chief....On they marched for three days, leaving everywhere behind them, as they went, traces of retributory power of the English in desolated villages and corpses dangling from the branches of trees".[4]

Kaye's description is corroborated by others. Russell says that the executions of natives were indiscriminate to the last degree. All the villages in front of Renaud's column were burnt when he halted.[5]

Sherer has described a similar scene along the line of Havelock's march.

"Many of the villages had been burnt by the way-side, and human beings there were none to be seen....the occasional taint in the air from suspended bodies upon which, before our very eyes, the loathsome pig of the country was engaged in feasting".[6] Even before the Martial Law was passed, "the military officers were hunting down the criminals of all kinds, and hanging them up with as little compunction as though they had been pariah-dogs or jackals or vermin of a lesser kind....Military courts and commissions were sitting daily, and sentencing old and young to be hanged with indiscriminate ferocity. Volunteer hanging parties went out into the districts and amateur executioners were not wanting to the occasion. One gentleman boasted of the numbers he had finished off quite "in an artistic manner", with mango-trees for gibbets and elephants for drops, the victims of this wild justice being strung up, as though for pastime, in 'the form of a figure of eight'.[7]

On June 9, 1857, the Government of India caused Martial Law to be proclaimed in the Divisions of Varanasi (Banaras) and Allahabad. What followed is thus described by Kaye:

"Martial law had been proclaimed; those terrible acts passed by the Legislative Council in May and June were in full operation; and soldiers and civilians alike were holding Bloody Assize, or slaying natives without any Assize at all, regardless of the sex or age. Afterwards, the thirst for blood grew stronger still. It is on the records of our British Parliament, in papers sent home by the Governor-General of India in Council, that "the aged, women and children, are sacrificed, as well as those guilty of rebellion." They were not deliberately hanged, but burnt to death in their villages—perhaps now and then accidentally shot. English men did not hesitate to boast, or to record their boasting in writing, that they had 'spared no one' and that "peppering away at niggers" was very pleasant pastime, "enjoyed amazingly." It has been stated in a book (*Travels of a Hindoo* by Bholanath Chandra) patronised by high class authorities, that "for three months eight dead-carts daily went their rounds from sunrise to sunset to take down the corpses which hung at the cross-roads and market places", and that "six thousand beings" had been thus summarily disposed of and launched into eternity".[8]

One of the volunteers in the fort of Allahabad writes thus of the events subsequent to the arrival of Neill with his re-inforcements:

"When we could once get out of the fort, we were all over the places, cutting down all natives who showed any signs of opposition; we enjoyed these trips very much. One trip I enjoyec amazingly; we got on board a steamer with a gun,

while the Sikhs and fusiliers marched up to the city. We steamed up throwing shots right and left, till we got up to the bad places, when we went on shore and peppered away with our guns, my old double barrel that I brought out, bringing down several niggers, so thirsty for vengeance was I. We fired the places right and left, and the flames shot up to the heavens as they spread, fanned by the breeze, showing that the day of vengeance had fallen on the treacherous villains. Every day we led expeditions to burn and destroy disaffected villages, and we had taken our revenge. I have been appointed the chief of a commission for the trial of all natives charged with offences against Government and persons. Day by day we have strung up eight or ten men. We have the power of life in our hands; and assure you we spare not. A very summary trial is all that takes place. The condemned culprit is placed under a tree, with a rope around his neck, on the top of a carriage, and when it is pulled away, off he swings".[9] "The system of burning villages", writes Holmes, "was in many instances fearfully abused. Old men who had done us no harm and helpless women, with sucking infants at their breasts, felt the weight of our vengeance, no less than the vilest malefactors, and as they wandered forth from their blazing huts, they must have cursed us as bitterly as we cursed the murderers of Cawnpore".[10]

The same scene was witnessed in the western part of India As General Barnard was marching to Delhi towards the end of May, 1857, many cruel deeds were wrought on villagers suspected of complicity in the ill-usage of the fugitives from Delhi

A contemporary military officer observes:

"Officers now went to courts-martial declaring they would hang the prisoners whether guilty or innocent, and the provost-marshall had his cart waiting for them at the tent-door. Some brought the names of offending villages, and applied to get them destroyed, and plundered on the strength of vague report. The fierceness of the men increased every day, often venting itself upon the camp servants, many of whom ran away. These prisoners, during the few hours between their trial and execution, were unceasingly tormented by the soldiers. They pulled their hair, pricked them with their bayonets, and forced them to eat cow's flesh, [illegible] by approving". The same writer refers to "fierce desire for blood, which manifested itself on every possible occasion", and remarks that the slightest whisper of anything short of indiscriminate vengeance was instantly silenced by twenty voices".[11]

The following may be cited as an example of the manner in which punishment was meted out to the mutineers at Peshawar. The fifty-fifth Regiment at Hoti Mardan in the Panjāb was suspected of treason, but had committed no overt act of mutiny. At the advance of an English force they fled towards the hills. Being pursued by Nicholson they turned back and fought bravely. But about 120 were killed and 150 captured. On June 10, 1857, forty of these were brought out, manacled and miserable, to the parade-ground. There, in the presence of the whole garrison of Peshawar and thousands of outsiders, the forty selected malefactors were blown up from the mouth of the guns.[12]

The atrocities at Kanpur, perpetrated by Nana Sahib, are the best known episodes of the Mutiny. One of these, the murder at

Sati Chaura ghat, has been described above.[12a] But there were many other crimes attributed to Nana, culminating in the brutal massacre of the prisoners at Bibighar. The following account of these is given on the authority of Kaye. On the 12th June a number of European fugitives from Fategarh, mostly women and children, numbering 126, were coming down in boats to seek refuge in the British cantonment at Kanpur. They were seized and carried to Nana. All the men, with the exception of three, were killed in his presence, and the women and children, along with the other English prisoners, who were taken from the riverside, were kept in a small house known as Bibighar. All these prisoners, huddled together, were given very coarse food, and their sufferings were intolerable. The women were taken out to grind for the Nana's household. Cholera and diarrhoea broke out among them, and some of them fell victims to these diseases.[13]

On the afternoon of the 15th of July, Nana Sahib learned that Havelock's army had crossed the Pandu river and was in full march upon his capital. On receiving this information Nana issued orders for the massacre of the women and children in the 'Bibighar'. There were four or five men among the captives. These were brought forth and killed in the presence of Nana. Then a party of sepoys was sent to shoot the women and children througn the doors and windows of their prison-house. But they fired at the ceilings of the chambers. So some butchers were called. They went in, with swords or long knives, among the women and children, and slashed them to death And there the bodies lay, some only half-dead, all through the night. Next morning the dead and the dying were brought out and thrown into an adjacent well. Some of the children were alive, almost unhurt, but they were also thrown into the well."[14]

We may now turn to the other side. It is unnecessary to describe in detail the terrible retributions that the British soldiery took when they captured important cities, but a few words may be said about Kanpur, Delhi, and Jhansi.

In view of what Neill had done before the provocation offered by the massacre at Kanpur, it is easier to imagine than to describe in detail the terrible atrocities perpetrated upon the people of Kanpur. But one particular mode of punishment deserves to be on record as a proof of his fiendish nature. This is described by Neill himself as follows:

"Whenever a rebel is caught he is immediately tried: and, unless he can prove a defence, he is sentenced to be hanged at once; but the chief rebels or ringleaders, I make first clean up a certain portion of the pool of blood, still two inches deep, in the shed where the fearful murder and mutilation of women and children took place. To touch blood is most abhorrent to the high-caste natives; they think

by doing so, they doom their souls to perdition. Let them think so. My object is to inflict a fearful punishment for a revolting, cowardly, barbarous deed, and to strike terror into these rebels. The first I caught was a subahdar, or native officer—a high caste Brahmin, who tried to resist my order to clean up the very blood he had helped to shed; but I made the provost-marshall to do his duty; and a few lashes soon made the miscreant accomplish his task. When done, he was taken out and immediately hanged, and after death, buried in a ditch at the roadside.".[15]

The atrocities that followed the capture of Delhi by the British have been described by many eye-witnesses.

"Delhi was practically deserted by the inhabitants within a few days of its fall. Large numbers had perished in the hands of the infuriated British soldiers, and most of those who survived left the city, but hundreds of them died of exposure and starvation. Enormous treasures were looted, and each individual soldier amassed a rich booty. Almost every house and shop had been ransacked and plundered after its inmates were killed, irrespective of the fact whether they were actual rebels, or even friends of the British. The General had issued an order to spare women and children, but it was honoured more in breach than in observance. We need hardly wonder at this if we remember the general attitude of even educated Englishmen. 'A gentleman, whose letters, published in the *Bombay Telegraph*, afterwards went the round of the Indian and English papers, remarked "that the general's *hookum* regarding the women and children was a mistake", as they were "not human beings, but fiends, or at best wild beasts deserving the death of dogs". He then describes the state of affairs on the 21st of September, i.e. the day after the city was finally and completely occupied by the British troops. "All the city people found within the walls when our troops entered were bayoneted on the spot; and the number was considerable, as you may suppose, when I tell you that in some houses forty or fifty persons were hiding. These were not mutineers but residents of the city, who trusted to our well-known mild rule for pardon. I am glad to say they were disappointed". "I have given up walking about the back streets of Delhi, as yesterday an officer and myself had taken a party of twenty men out patrolling, and we found fourteen women with their throats cut from ear to ear by their own husbands, and laid out in their shawls. We caught a man there who said he saw them killed, for fear they should fall into our hands; and showed us their husbands, who had done the best thing they could afterwards and killed themselves".[16]

The Bombay correspondent of the *Times* wrote: "No such scene has been witnessed in the city of Shah Jehan since the day that Nadir Shah, seated in the little mosque in Chandee Chouk, directed and superintended the massacre of its inhabitants".[17] Kaye observes: "Many who had never struck a blow against us—who had tried to follow their peaceful pursuits—and who had been plundered and buffeted by their own armed countrymen, were pierced by our bayonets, or cloven by our sabres, or brained by our muskets or rifles".[18] There was slaughter on a large scale by one Mr. Brind in revenge of an attack upon a party of Sikhs. Kaye says: "Many of the enemy were slain on the spot, and others, "against whom bloodproofs, as also relics of our murdered countrywomen, children and other Christian residents" were to be found on their persons or in

their houses, were reserved for more humiliating punishments. Following the example set by Neill at Cawnpore, he (Brind) kept these men to labour in cleansing our polluted lines before their final punishment".[19] Holmes writes:

"A Military Governor had been appointed; but he could do little to restrain the passions of those who surrounded him. Natives were brought forward in batches to be tried by a Military Commission or by Special Commissioners, each one of whom had been invested by the Supreme Government with full powers of life and death. These judges were in no mood to show mercy. Almost all who were tried were condemned; and almost all who were condemned were sentenced to death. A four-square gallows was erected in a conspicuous place in the city: and five or six culprits were hanged every day. English officers used to sit by, puffing at their cigars, and look on at the convulsive struggles of the victims."[20]

Nana's cruelties have attained world-wide notoriety. But black though his deeds were, there are no means to determine the motives which impelled him and his personal share in them. But no such doubt can possibly remain in the case of Nana's white counterpart in the Panjāb, Frederick Cooper, whose description of his own exploits[21] reveals a fiendish mentality which is rare, perhaps unique, even among the brutalised military officers of those days. He has given a detailed account of how he dealt with the 26th N. I. against which no charge could be levelled excepting the murder of an officer by a lonely fanatic. In course of their flight the main body of sepoys "took refuge in an island and boats with *sowars* (soldiers) were sent against them." What followed is thus described by Cooper.[22]

"The doomed men, with joined palms, crowded down to the shore on the approach of the boats, one side of which bristled with about sixty muskets, besides sundry revolvers and pistols. In utter despair, forty or fifty dashed into the stream and disappeared....and some *sowars* being on the point of taking pot-shots at the heads of the swimmers, orders were given not to fire".

"They (i.e. the sepoys) evidently were possessed of a sudden and insane idea, that they were going to be tried by court-martial, after some luxurious refreshment. In consequence of which, sixty-six stalwart sepoys submitted to be bound by a single man....and stacked like slaves in a hold into one of the two boats emptied for the purpose". On reaching the shore they were all tightly bound, and fresh batches were brought from the island and treated in the same way. They had then to march six miles to the Police Station at Ujnalla, almost all the road being knee-deep in water. By midnight 282 prisoners were taken to the Police Station. Next morning, August 1, 1857, the prisoners were pinioned, tied together, and brought out thus, in batches of ten, to be shot. They were filled with astonishment and rage when they learned their fate.

But Cooper went on with his task. He proceeds: "About 150 having been thus executed, one of the executioners swooned away (he was the oldest of the firing party), and a little respite was allowed. Then proceeding, the number had arrived at two hundred and thirty-seven, when the district officer was informed that the remainder refused to come out of the bastion, where they had been imprisoned temporarily, a few hours before...The doors were opened, and behold!

they were nearly all dead! Unconsciously the tragedy of Holwell's Black Hole had been re-enacted....Forty-five bodies dead from fright, exhaustion, fatigue, heat and partial suffocation, were dragged into light, and consigned, in common with all the other bodies, into one common pit, by the hands of the village sweepers".

Cooper was congratulated for his action both by John Lawrence, the Chief Commissioner, and Robert Montgomery, Judicial Commissioner for the Panjāb.[23] Cooper congratulated himself that "within forty-eight hours of the date of the crime, there fell by the law nearly 500 men". "What crime? What law?", asked Montgomery Martin, "demanded the extermination of a helpless multitude?" Referring to such criticism a modern British historian, Holmes, has lamented that for his "splendid" work Cooper was "assailed by the hysterical cries of ignorant humanitarians."[24] Greathed remarks; "The sacrifice of five hundred villainous lives for the murder of two English is a retribution that will be remembered'. At this Thompson justly observes: "Yes, it is one of the memories of India, as Cawnpore is of England".[25] Cooper's narration reaches its climax in these words: "There is a well at Cawnpore, but there is also one at Ujnalia".[26] Here Cooper has blurted out a great truth which no one, particularly no Englishman, should forget. Once again Thompson rightly says: "I see no reason why he should be denied the immortality he craved so earnestly. Let his name be remembered with Nana Sahib's".[27]

But Cooper was by no means an exceptional specimen. A contemporary military officer, writing of the English community in the Panjāb at the time remarks that from the highest to the lowest "everyone talked in the same strain—to 'pott', 'polish off', *Saf karna* i.e. make clean or exterminate, a large bag of pandies, was the desire of every heart. Orders for the execution of deserters or mutineers were written in round terms and signed with initials".[28]

Abundant evidence is furnished by the Englishmen themselves that everywhere the English officers made an indiscriminate massacre of guilty and innocent alike. Cooper tells us· "Short shrift awaited all captures. The motto of General Nicholson for mutineers was *a la lanterne*."[29]

Mrs Coopland, a clergyman's widow, refers triumphantly to the achievements of Col. Cotton and his party at Fatehpur Sikri:

"They took a great many prisoners, and made them clean out the church; but as it was contrary to their 'caste', they were obliged to do it at the point of the bayonet: some did it with alacrity, thinking they would be spared hanging; but they were mistaken, for they were all hung".[30]

Lieutenant Majendie remarked:

"Crime, of course, is a *facon de parler*. It was taken for granted that every sepoy had murdered women and children".[31] In a reminiscent mood he states:

"I spent that night on picket at the Musjid above mentioned, much of our time being passed in shooting or hanging prisoners taken during the day . Many a poor wretch breathed his last at this spot, dying, for the most part, with a calmness and courage worthy of a better cause".[32]

Regarding Jhansi, R. M. Martin writes:

"On the 4th of April, the fort and remainder of the City were taken possession of by the troops, who, maddened by the recollection of massacre committed there, and by the determined resistance of the people, committed fearful slaughter. No less than 5,000 persons are stated to have perished at Jhansi, or to have been cut down by the "flying camps"....Some flung themselves down wells, or otherwise committed suicide; having first slain their women, sooner than trust them to the mercy of the conquerors. The plunder obtained in the fort and town is said to have been very great A large number of executions took place daily".[33]

Regarding Lakhnau (Lucknow) Majendie observes:

"At the time of the capture of Lucknow—a season of indiscriminate massacre —such distinction was not made, and the unfortunate who fell into the hands of our troops was made short work of—sepoy or Oude villager, it mattered not—no questions were asked; his skin was black, and did not that suffice" A piece of rope and the branch of a tree, or a rifle bullet through his brain, soon terminated the poor devil's existence "[34]

We find the following minute in the proceedings of the Governor-General in Council, dated 24th December, 1857, regarding the state of affairs throughout the North-West Provinces and the Panjab in the previous July.

"The indiscriminate hanging, not only of persons of all shades of guilt, but of those whose guilt was at the least very doubtful, and the general burning and plunder of villages, whereby the innocent as well as the guilty, without regard to age or sex, were indiscriminately punished and in some cases, sacrificed, had deeply exasperated large communities not otherwise hostile to the Government".[35]

But the cruelty of the English was not inflicted only upon those against whom there might be any reasonable suspicion. They did not spare even their own servants Here is the account of an eye-witness:

"The spirit of exasperation which existed against Natives at this time will scarcely be believed in Europe. Servants, a class of men who behaved, on the whole, throughout the mutiny with astonishing fidelity, were treated even by many of the officers with outrageous harshness. The men beat and ill-used them. In the batteries they would make the *bheesties* (water-carriers) to whom they showed more kindness than to the rest, sit out of the works to give them water. Many of the unfortunates were killed. The sick syces, grass-cutters, and dooly-bearers, many of whom were wounded in our service, lay for months on the ground exposed to the sun by day and the cold at night....A general massacre of the inhabitants of Delhi, a large number of whom were known to wish us success, was openly proclaimed. Blood-thirsty boys might be heard recommending that all the Native orderlies, irregulars, and other 'poorbeahs' in our camp should be shot."[36]

Kaye, who quotes this passage, adds that such treatment was only the old normal state of things—unaltered, unrepressed; and further states:

"It is related that, in the absence of tangible enemies, some of our soldiery, who turned out on this occasion, butchered a number of unoffending camp-followers, servants, and others who were huddling together in vague alarm, near the Christian church-yard. No loyalty, no fidelity, no patient good service on the part of these good people could extinguish, for a moment, the fierce hatred which possessed our white soldiers against all who wore the dusky livery of the East".[37]

We may now refer to the views of the great military officers regarding the method of punishing the mutineers. Nicholson, the hero of the Mutiny, "the prototype of the strong, silent, God's Englishman", wrote to Edwardes:

"Let us propose a Bill for the flaying alive, impalement, or burning of the murderers of the women and children at Delhi. The idea of simply hanging the perpetrators of such atrocities is maddening. I wish that I were in that part of the world, that if necessary I might take the law into my own hands".

Nicholson conveniently forgets that his own men murdered more than ten times the number of women and children killed by the Indians. But he proceeds:

"As regards torturing the murderers of the women and children: If it be right otherwise, I do not think we should refrain from it, because it is a Native custom. We are told in the Bible that stripes shall be meted out according to faults, and if hanging is sufficient punishment for such wretches, it is also severe for ordinary mutineers. If I had them in my power to-day, and knew that I were to die tomorrow, I would inflict the most excruciating tortures I could think of on them with a perfectly easy conscience".[38]

Nicholson quotes the Bible. How one wishes that while commending the torture of the murderers of women and children, somebody would have repeated to him the famous admonition of Jesus Christ: "He who is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone at her". But though his proposed Bill for torture was not passed, Nicholson's ideal was translated into practice. Lieut. Majendie, an eye-witness, tells us how the Sikhs and Europeans together, after repeatedly bayoneting a wounded prisoner in the face, burnt him alive over a slow fire:

"The horrible smell of his burning flesh as it cracked and blackened in the flames, rising up and poisoning the air—so in this nineteenth century, with its boasted civilisation and humanity, a human being should lie roasting and consuming to death, while Englishmen and Sikhs, gathered in little knots around, looked calmly on. No one will deny, I think, that this man, at least, adequately expiated, by his frightful and cruel death, any crimes of which he may have been guilty".[39]

Sir Henry Cotton was told by a military officer that one day his Sikh soldiers requested him to come and see the mutineers who were captured by them. He went and found "these wretched Mu-

hammadans at their last gasp, tied to the ground, stripped of their clothing, and deeply branded over every part of their bodies from head to foot with red-hot coppers".[40]

Russell observes: "All these kinds of vindictive, unchristian, Indian torture, such as sewing Mahomedans in pig-skins, smearing them with pork-fat before execution and burning their bodies, and forcing Hindus to defile themselves, are disgraceful"[41] To the same category belongs the policy, systematically followed by Neill, of *burning* all the dead bodies of Muslims and *burying* those of the Hindus, so that both might suffer eternal perdition.[42]

The cruelties perpetrated during the revolt of 1857 and the psychology behind them make painful reading. But they form an essential part of the story and cannot be ignored. It will serve no useful purpose to draw a veil over them. Nor is there any adequate reason why we would refuse to face realities. They have a great lesson for humanity. They prove, if proof were needed, that the much-vaunted culture of the progressive world is only skin-deep,—whether that skin is black or white, belongs to the spiritual east or materialistic west, to the civilised Europe or backward Asia. The century that has elapsed since the memorable event has added fresh evidence to support this view. Mankind would do well to ponder over this—that only a very thin line demarcates human being from an animal. The atrocities of 1857 should be remembered lest we forget this unpleasant but unescapable truth. Nothing is to be gained by ignoring or suppressing it. There may be some hope for the future if the naked realities of the grim tragedy touch our conscience to the quick and make us strive for a radical change in our outlook.

The tale of atrocities also demonstrates how little one can rely even upon the great English historians of the Mutiny. Thus G. B. Malleson, who superseded Kaye and completed the Official History of the Mutiny, observes:

'I am anxious to say a word or two to disabuse the minds of those who may have been influenced by rumours current at the period as to the nature of the retaliation dealt out to the rebels by the British soldiers in the hour of their triumph. I have examined all those rumours—I have searched out the details attending the storming of Delhi, of Lakhnao, and of Jhansi—and I can emphatically declare that, not only was the retaliation not excessive, it did not exceed the bounds necessary to ensure the safety of the conquerors. But beyond the deaths he inflicted in fair fight, the British soldier perpetrated no unnecessary slaughter."[43]

Malleson wrote this in 1892 when all the facts mentioned in this chapter were published. We must therefore suppose that Malleson

either did not care to acquaint himself with all the published facts, or deliberately perverted the truth,—both being very serious blemishes on the part of a historian.

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1. Malleson, *The Indian Mutiny of 1857*, p. 78.
2. Ball, 1. 259.
3. Durgadas Bandyopadhyaya, *Bidrohe Bangali*, 144.
4. Kaye—I, II. 284.
5. Russell, Sir W. H., *My Diary in India in the year 1858-9*, pp. 221-2.
6. Kaye—I, II. 368.
7. Kaye—I, II. 235-6.
8. Kaye—I, II. 269.
9. Ball, I 257.
10. Holmes, 220-1
11. *Siege*, 59-60.
12. Kaye—I, II. 491.

12a. See pp 486-7.

13. Kaye—I, II 353 ff.
14. The account is based on Kaye—I, II. 372-3. But as Kaye himself admits, authentic evidence is altogether lacking and some obscurity surrounds this terrible incident. The principal witness, John Fitchell, was 'clearly convicted of direct falsehood'. No reliance can be placed on Nanakchand for reasons stated above (p. 480). While there is no doubt about the massacre, the gruesome details, particularly the role attributed to Nana, rest upon very insufficient evidence. Dr. S. N. Sen has also come to the same conclusion, after an elaborate discussion (Sen, 158-60).
15. Ball, I. 390. As regards Neill's statement about "pool of blood still two inches deep" and "the mutilation of women", reference may be made to the following statement of Sherer who was one of the first few to visit Bibighar after the massacre: "The whole of the pavement was thickly caked with blood. Surely this is enough, without saying 'the clotted gore lay ankle deep,' which, besides being most distressing, is absolutely incorrect". "Of mutilation, in that house at least, there were no signs, nor at that time was there any writing on the walls" (Sen, 160)
16. Martin, R. Montgomery, *The Indian Empire*, II 449.
17. Ibid, 450.
18. Kaye—I, III. 636
19. Kaye—I, III. 637.
20. Holmes, 398.
21. Frederick Cooper, *The Crisis in the Punjab*.
22. Ibid, 157-64.
23. Ibid, 167-8
24. Holmes, 363
25. Thompson, E, *The other side of the Medal*, 66.
26. Cooper, op. cit., 167
27. Thompson, op. cit. 66.
28. *Siege*, 201.
29. Cooper, op. cit, 149.
30. Coopland, 243.
31. Majendie, Major V.D., *Up among the Pandies*, p. 187.
32. Ibid, 205.
33. Martin, op. cit, II. 485.
34. Majendie, op. cit., pp. 195-6.
35. Thompson, op. cit., 73-4.
36. *Chaplain's Narrative of the Siege of Delhi*, quoted in Kaye—I, II. 581.
37. Kaye—I, II. 581.
38. Thompson, op. cit., 43.
39. Majendie, op. cit., 187.
40. Cotton, H. *Indian and Home Memories*, 143.
41. Russell, op. cit., II. 42-3.
42. MS. L., Vol. 176, p. 635.
43. G. B. Malleson, *The Indian Mutiny of 1857*, 4th Edition, London, 1892. pp 405-6 The book was first published in 1890.

CHAPTER XX

THE NATURE OF THE OUTBREAK OF 1857

1. *The alleged conspiracy*

Divergent opinions have been expressed regarding the nature of the great outbreak of 1857. Volumes have been written on this subject, both by contemporary and later writers, and it is almost an impossible task to deal in detail with the different views and arguments advanced to support them.

These views may be broadly divided into two classes. Some think that the outbreak was really a rebellion of the people rather than merely a mutiny of the soldiers. Others hold that it was primarily and essentially a mutiny of sepoys, though in certain areas it drifted into a revolt of the people. Among contemporary writers, the first has been discussed at length by John Bruce Norton in a book entitled *Topics for Indian Statesmen*, and the second by Charles Raikes in his *Notes on the revolt in North-Western Province of India*, both published in 1858.

That the second view had a large body of supporters among Englishmen, immediately after the suppression of the Mutiny, will be evident from the following extract from an article in the *Edinburgh Review* (April, 1859): "Throughout its whole progress it has faithfully retained the character of a military revolt...Except in the newly annexed state of Oude it has not been taken up by the population. Now it is this circumstance which has saved India to Englishmen". The *Times* also expressed similar views.[1] On the other hand, a large number of English writers, such as Duff, Malleson, Kaye and Ball subscribed to the first view and represented the outbreak of 1857 as an organized campaign to drive away the British from India. It is, however, significant that all the contemporary Indian writers, some of whom occupied very high positions in public life, unanimously held the second view and looked upon the outbreak as essentially a military insurrection. Thus Kishorichand Mitra, an eminent Bengali, writing in 1858, says: "The insurrection is essentially a military insurrection. It is the revolt of a *lac* of sepoys...It has nothing of the popular element in it. The proportion of those who have joined the rebels sinks into nothingness when compared with those whose sympathies are enlisted with the Government. While the former may be counted by thousands, the latter may be counted by millions."[2] The same view was expressed by Sambhu Chandra

Mukhopadhyaya,[3] and Harish Chandra Mukherji,[4] two eminent Bengali public men, and Sir Syed Ahmad,[5] who himself played an important role in the outbreak, as mentioned above, and rose to high distinction as the leader of the Indian Musalmans in the nineteenth century. Reference has already been made to the writings of three contemporary Indians[6] who were eye-witnesses of the events in Delhi and Bareilly. We have also the writings of one Bengali,[7] who was in Varanasi on pilgrimage, when the sepoys broke out into mutiny there, and also a few casual references in the autobiography of Rajnarain Basu, who is regarded as the father of nationalism in Bengal and to whom reference will be made later. None of them felt any sympathy for the mutinous sepoys or the cause they represented, and all looked upon them as evil-doers rather than fighters for freedom. No reference is made by any of them to any popular support behind the mutiny. Godse Bhatji, a Marathi who travelled over North India during the outbreak, also expressed similar views.[7a]

Both the British Indian Association and the Muhammadan Association of Calcutta passed resolutions on the outbreak of the Mutiny, denouncing it and trusting that it would meet with 'no sympathy, countenance or support from the bulk of the civil population.'[7b]

In contrast with the contemporary Indians, their descendants of the present day look upon the outbreak of 1857 as a general revolt of the people, and what is more curious, accuse the Englishmen of deliberately misrepresenting the great popular rebellion as a mutiny. It will be quite clear from what has been said above, that there is not the least truth in this accusation. The divergence of views did not follow any racial line, at least at the beginning, save that, so far as available evidence goes, it was the Indians, and not the Englishmen of the time, who unanimously represented or misrepresented the outbreak as essentially a mutiny. That this was the general view of even eminent Indian statesmen down to the end of the nineteenth century is proved by the statement recorded by Dadabhai Naoroji that "the people in India not only had no share in it (the Mutiny), but were actually ready at the call of the authorities to rise and support them."[7c]

Today the Indians, generally speaking, subscribe to the views of Norton and his followers. Indeed, since the beginning of the present century, the pendulum has swung to the opposite extreme, and most Indians not only look upon the outbreak of 1857 as a great revolt of the people, but go even further and claim it to be the first 'Indian War of Independence.' This view has been made popular by the publication of a book with the above title by Sri V. D. Savarkar, an eminent Indian patriot, who played a very prominent

part in India's struggle for freedom in the present century, and suffered much for his activities in the hands of the British authorities. A general revolt or a war of independence necessarily implies or presupposes a definite plan and organization. This is admitted in the latest edition of Savarkar's book where it is stated, about the outbreak of 1857, that the "national minded leaders and thinkers have regarded it as a planned and organised political and military rising aimed at destroying the British power in India".[6] Further, such an organization implies a pre-concerted conspiracy or plot to drive out the British. It is, therefore, necessary to discuss in detail how far the available evidence proves the existence of any organization in India, political or military, resulting from a secret plot or conspiracy, prior to 1857.

Among the British historians of the Mutiny, Malleson held the most definite view about the conspiracy, and conceived a very clear picture of it in his mind. He has dealt with it in his book *The Indian Mutiny of 1857*, Chapter II, entitled "The Conspirators". The conspirators, in his opinion, were Maulavi Ahmadulla of Faizabad, Nana Sahib, and the Rani of Jhansi, who had entered into negotiations before the explosion of 1857. It will appear from the preceding narrative that there is not the least justification for this view. The circumstances under which Bahadur Shah, Nana Sahib, Kunwar Singh, and the Rani of Jhansi cast in their lot with the mutinous sepoys, are sufficient to expose the hollowness of the whole theory.

The only evidence brought forward in support of a general conspiracy against the British is the statement of Sitaram Bawa before H. B. Devereux, Judicial Commissioner of Mysore, on January 18, 1858. According to Sitaram's evidence there were four conspiracies in each of which a large number of ruling princes of India were involved. The first was begun by Baiza Bai, the grandmother of the Sindhia, about the year 1837. The second was planned by the Mysore Raja after or shortly before the outbreak of the Mutiny, with the object of restoring a number of ex-ruling princes to their thrones. The Holkar, Nana Sahib and other great princes were members of this conspiracy. Then came the conspiracy of the Raja of Satara in 1857 of which the details are not given. The last was the conspiracy which resulted in the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857, and the general revolt which followed. Nana who planned this wrote letters 'about three years ago' (i.e. in 1854) to Baiza Bai and to all the other States.

"All this was communicated by the Nana to Baiza Bai and to all the other States—to Holkar, Scindia, Assam (or Burma), Jeypoor, Joudpoor, Kolah Boonder—Jhalawar—Rewah—Baroda—

Kutch—Bhooj, Nagpur, to the Ghonds of Chanda (and doubtless Sambalpur) to Hyderabad, Sorapoor, Kolapoor, Sattara, Indore,—in fact he did not leave out any place where there was a native prince. He wrote to all....He (Raja of Travancore) is the only one who did not at all agree. Until Oude was annexed, Nana Sahib did not get answers from any one; but when that occurred, many began to take courage and to answer him. The plot among the sepoys first took place—the discontent about the greased cartridges. Then answers began to pour in. Golab Singh, of Jummoo, was the first to send an answer. He said that he was ready with men, money, and arms, and he sent money to Nana Sahib, through one of the Lucknow Soukars".[9]

All this raises grave suspicion about the real value of the whole evidence. Though these conspiracies were going on for about twenty years and so many big rulers were involved, yet no other evidence has so far come to light about any of them. Nothing is known about the Raja of Mysore's great conspiracy from any other sources, and the British Government, in spite of the positive assertion of Sitaram Bawa about it, took no steps against him or even made any enquiry about it.

Fortunately, we have some means of testing the statement about Baiza Bai who is said to have begun the conspiracy twenty years back, and finally matured it with the help of Nana Sahib in 1857. When the Rao Sahib, Rani of Jhansi, and Tantia Topi captured Gwalior, as stated above,[10] the Ranis and the principal Sardars of Gwalior proceeded to the fort of Nurwa, 30 miles from Gwalior. Rao Sahib pressed Baiza Bai to come and take the charge of affairs. He wrote to her: "All is well here. Your going from hence, was not, to my thinking, right. I have already written to you, but have received no answer. This should not be. I send this letter by Ramjee Chowley Jemdar. Do come and take charge of your seat of Government. It is my intention to take Gwalior, only to have a meeting and go on. This is my purpose. Therefore it is necessary that you should come making no denial". "The Baija Bai sent the letter to Sir Robert Hamilton, who was with Brigadier Smith's force, which was advancing on Gwalior from Sipree by the Jhansi Road".[11] Bahadur Shah also wrote two letters to Baiza Bai asking her to join the revolt, but she replied to neither of them.[12] All this shows the stuff of which Baiza Bai was made, and discredits the whole story of her long-drawn intrigue for over twenty years.

As regards the part played by Nana, it would appear from what has been said above that it is extremely unlikely that he had even any understanding with the sepoys at Kanpur before they mutinied. According to Sitaram, Nana entered into a secret understanding

with the King of Delhi that while the latter would be the Emperor of Hindusthan, the former would be his Dewan. According to the statement of Ahsanulla, the most trusted adviser of Bahadur Shah, he had no previous understanding with Nana Sahib, Kunwar Singh or Rani of Jhansi.[13] As a matter of fact, there cannot be the least doubt, from what has been said above, that Bahadur Shah had nothing to do with the mutiny of the sepoys and, though forced to assume their leadership, was always loyal to the British and carried on secret and treasonable negotiations with them for his personal benefit.[14]

It is to be noted that Sitaram gives all the credit of organizing the conspiracy to Nana's *guru* Dassa Bawa, and none to Nana. As a matter of fact, he expressly states that Nana was a worthless fellow and was entirely a tool in the hands of Dassa Bawa. This man, aged 125 years, got enormbus riches from Nana by playing a trick upon him by his Hanuman horoscope, and yet he is said to have been the ablest leader in whole Hindusthan and had "the conduct of the whole affairs" in connection with the rising of the sepoys in his hands. He matured the plan of the rising with Baiza Bai as early as 1851 A.D. Sitaram not only knew the secret conspiracies of all the leading princes of India, but even the plans of the campaign, viz., the striking of the first blow at Banaras with the help of the Raja of Rewa, and then marching against Calcutta.[15]

All this grandiloquent talk of Sitaram Bawa about his knowledge of everybody and everything shows the stuff he was made of. No reliance ought to be placed on any of his statements without corroboration from other sources.

We may now consider the question of Bahadur Shah's conspiracy with Persia, of which much has been made by Kaye, Duff, Norton, Malleson and others in support of their theory of a general conspiracy to drive out the English from India.

We may begin by quoting a passage from a book of Syed Ahmad, who had ample opportunities of knowing Bahadur Shah's character and personality, and, being himself a Muslim, was not likely to make any disparaging remark about the last of the Mughuls in Delhi, unless he were convinced of its truth. Referring to Bahadur Shah's correspondence with the Shah of Persia, he observes:

"I do not consider it a matter for surprise that the ex-King of Delhi should have despatched a firman to the King of Persia. Such was the credulity of the former, that had anybody told him that the King of Genii, in fairyland, owed him fealty, he would unhesi-

tatingly have believed him, and have written ten firmans instead of one".[16]

It is not surprising therefore that Bahadur Shah was easily induced to write a letter to the Shah of Persia, detailing his grievances against the English. For Bahadur Shah was assured that the Prince Royal of Persia had occupied Bushire and would soon advance by way of Kabul and Kandahar to Delhi and restore him to his ancestral throne. As Ahsanulla stated, many Chiefs, including Bahadur Shah, were of opinion that if the Emperor of Russia were to aid the Persians, the English would be defeated and the Persians would become master of India. There were also wild rumours to the effect that a hundred thousand Russians were coming to India.

Reference may be made in this connection to a proclamation in the name of the King of Persia, copies of which were put up on the walls of the Jama Masjid and at the entrances to the streets and lanes of Delhi. The substance of the proclamation is that it was a religious obligation on all true Muslims to assist the King of Persia and fight against the English. The proclamation also stated that the Persian King would very soon come to India and annex this country as a dependency.[17] It is to be noted that the proclamation does not mention the name of Bahadur Shah, nor refers in any way to an alliance between him and the King of Persia.

On a careful consideration of all the facts and statements it appears that there are no good grounds to believe that there was any conspiracy between Bahadur Shah and the King of Persia with a view to drive out the British from India.[18] The utmost that can be said is that Persian alliance was desired by the former, and there was a sort of vague feeling current in Delhi, at least in the higher circle, that Persian invasion of India, backed by Russian support, was imminent. The royal family hoped that such an invasion might ruin the British. This very fact shows how little these people knew of the international situation, and what little value is to be attached to the so-called conspiracy of Bahadur Shah with Persia and Russia. If Bahadur Shah really entertained any such design we can only regard him as a man ignorant of the affairs of the world and having a very poor statesmanship. Sir Syed Ahmad goes even further as the following remarks would show: "Nor is there the slightest reason for thinking that the rebels in Hindusthan received any aid from Russia or from Persia. As between Roman Catholics and Protestants, so between the Mussulman of Persia and of Hindustan, cordial co-operation is impossible".[19]

2. *The Chapatis*

The wide circulation of *chapatis*, just before the outbreak of 1857, is regarded by many as an important evidence in favour of an organized conspiracy and, as such, requires some detailed notice.

The *chapati* (small unleavened bread) is the staple food of a large section of people in India who do not take rice. It is proved on indisputable authority that about the beginning of the year 1857, *chapatis* were passed on from village to village over a very wide area. The method of circulation has been described by various persons. Here is a typical example: "One of the Choukidars of Cawnpore ran to another in Fategarh, the next village, and placing in his hand two *chapatis* directed him to make ten more of the same kind, and give two of them to each of the five nearest Chowkidars, with instructions to perform the same service." Though the distributing agencies varied, the process was very nearly the same in all cases. The circulation was often remarkably quick and, according to one authority, ten days more than sufficed for every village Chowkidar to have received and distributed it.

A searching examination of many witnesses revealed the very interesting fact that nobody knew anything definite about either the object of the circulation of the *chapatis* or the original source from which the idea originated.[20] Some believed that it was intended as a preventive against epidemic or a propitiatory observance to avert some impending calamity. Some thought that the *chapatis* were circulated by the Government in order to force Christianity on the people. Some held the exactly opposite view, *viz.*, that the *chapatis* were circulated to preserve unpolluted the religion which the Government proposed to subvert. Others held that it was meant to sound a note of alarm and preparation—a forerunner of some universal popular outbreak. It was also believed that the *chapati* was a sort of charm. Sitaram Bawa, whose evidence about a wide-spread conspiracy against the British has been referred to above, gave out that Dassa Bawa, the *Guru* of Nana, prepared these magic cakes and told him (Nana) that as far as they should be carried, so far should the people be on his side.

In view of this wide diversity of opinions it is puerile to attach any importance to the *chapatis* in connection with the outbreak of 1857. For even if it be taken for granted that the *chapatis* were deliberately designed by some as a signal for the outbreak, we may safely assert that it was certainly not understood by the people as such. It seems, therefore, to be certain that the large circulation of *chapatis* cannot be regarded as a primary or even contributory cause of the great outbreak of 1857. The same thing may be said

of the lotuses which are also said to have been circulated along with the *chapatis*. But no official records seem to refer to the circulation of lotus like *chapati*.

3. *Sepoy Organization*

In view of the preceding discussion we may dismiss the idea that the sepoys were merely tools in the hands of a few conspirators. There might have been factors or agencies to excite or incite them, but the mutiny was the work of the sepoys themselves. It is therefore, necessary, to investigate whether there was any organization among the sepoys of different localities, and if so, what was their nature and extent.

As noted above, the mutinous sepoys at Mirat set the example of killing Europeans, burning their houses, and then marching straight to Delhi; and this formed the general pattern of mutiny that took place in other cantonments at later dates. *Prima facie*, it seems to be the result of a previous understanding. This is supported by the following statement of Ahsanulla· "The Volunteer Regiment (38th N.I.) of Delhi said, that before the breaking out of the Mutiny, they had leagued with the troops at Mirat, and that the latter had correspondence with the troops in all other places, so that from every cantonment troops would arrive at Delhi.

"After the defection of the native army, I understood that letters were received at Delhi, from which it was evident that they had beforehand made common cause among themselves. The mutineers at Delhi also wrote to other regiments requesting them to come over...........The usual draft of letters addressed by the Delhi mutineers was this: 'So many of us have come in here, do you also, according to your promise, come over here quickly'. Before their defection the native troops had settled it among themselves to kill all Europeans, including women and children, in every cantonment".[21]

Some other witnesses in the trial of Bahadur Shah also heard reports or rumour about a previous agreement between the sepoys of Delhi and Mirat. On the other hand, Munshi Mohanlal makes the following statement: "I heard from two sepoys that the mutineers at Meerut had not at first any idea of coming to Delhi. This was settled after a long discussion, when the advantages of this course (which are explained in details) appeared to be very great" [22] Sir John Lawrence says that Mohanlal's statement was corroborated by extensive and minute inquiries. He also adds that "the general voice (of the Meerut mutineers) at first was for seeking refuge in

Rohilkhand", and "that a large party of these troopers actually fled through Delhi into the Gurgaon district the very next day".[23]

In view of this conflicting evidence, it is necessary to lay stress on a few points which are definitely known and are likely to throw light on the point at issue. In the first place, there was correspondence between sepoys of different parts of India regarding the greased cartridges. In particular, the disbanded regiments of Barrackpur took good care to intimate their views to the sepoys of distant cantonments, and even threatened them, saying: "If you receive these cartridges, intermarriage and eating and drinking in common shall cease between yourselves and us".[24]

Secondly, the fact that sepoys all over an extensive area broke into mutiny within a month or two indicates some sort of previous negotiations and understanding. At the same time it is necessary to remember, that there was no simultaneous rising of the sepoys on a particular date, that the sepoys in many places were either steady in their loyalty or hesitant for a long time, and ultimately yielded only to persuasion, pressure or the sudden impulse of the moment. A concrete example is furnished by the statement of Ameen Khan, son of Kareem Khan, a sepoy of the 12th N.I. posted at Jhansi at the time of the Mutiny: "One man whose name is not known to me, a servant or a relation of some one in my regiment, brought a chit from Delhi stating that the whole army of the Bengal Presidency had mutinied, and as the Regiment stationed at Jhansi had not done so, men composing it were outcastes or had lost their faith. On the receipt of this letter the four ringleaders, above alluded to, prevailed upon their countrymen to revolt and to carry out their resolution".[25]

These considerations support the statement of Ahsanulla that the plan of the mutineers had not been matured and, in particular, no date had been fixed when the sepoys broke out at Mirat. He is probably also not far from truth, when he attributes the premature rising at Mirat to one of the two causes, namely, "either the Mirat troops were too precipitate, or the Government behaved severely towards them". Ahsanulla also held the view that the native army mutinied of their own accord, and not at the instigation of any chief, because in the latter case the mutineers would have either themselves proceeded to join their instigator or caused him to join them.[26]

On the whole, it appears very probable that there was secret discussion among leading sepoys in various cantonments, and the suggestion of a concerted rising in case the greased cartridges were forced upon them found favour with many. No definite plan or

organization was adopted, and the rank and file were not yet taken into confidence, at least in many cantonments. Whether, in course of time, a full-fledged conspiracy would have been evolved out of these loose talks and vague suggestions, nobody can say, but certainly that state was not reached when the sepoys at Mirat mutinied on May 10. This view is fully supported by the following observations of Sir John Lawrence in a minute dated 19 April, 1858:

"If there was, indeed, a conspiracy in the country, and that conspiracy extended to the army, how can it be reasonably explained why none of those who adhered to our cause were acquainted with the circumstance? However small may be the number of our adherents when compared with those that took part against us, the actual number of the former is considerable. Many of these men remained true under all trials, others again died fighting on our side. None of these people can speak of conspiracy in the first instance, none again of the conspirators, who expiated their guilt by the forfeit of their lives, ever made any such confession that I am aware of, though such confession would doubtless have saved their lives None of the documents or papers which I have seen lead to such an impression".[27]

Many Europeans thought at the time that the mutiny at Mirat was a blessing in disguise, for if that sudden ebullition had not disturbed the plan of the conspirators, there would have been an organized general outbreak on a fixed date at a fixed hour, and that would have been a far greater peril to the British Empire in India. On the other hand, one might argue with equal plausibility, that the whole thing would have ended in smoke if the sepoys at Mirat had not forced the pace of the mutiny by their sudden and impulsive action For, confidential talks, or even mutual understanding among leading sepoys in different cantonments, on current problems affecting them all, should not be regarded as an unusual thing, and there is a wide gap between such loose talks and a definite conspiracy which would demand the supreme sacrifice, on the part of the sepoys, of their lives and every thing else they held dear and near. The question of details, such as the election of a leader or leaders, which had evidently not yet been settled, might have caused a serious rift in the ranks. It is not difficult to imagine, as a possibility if not a strong probability, that while such talks were going on, the initial excitement of the sepoys would have considerably cooled down, particularly as the cartridge question was not difficult of solution, and the incipient conspiracy would die a natural death. An example is more catching than calculated deliberations, and if the events at Mirat had not set it ablaze, the smouldering flame of discontent might have run its course at no distant date. As regards the revolt of civil population, it is possible to take a dispassionate view of its true nature only if one dismisses the idea of a general conspiracy, or even of a concerted action on the part of its so-called leaders like Bahadur Shah, Nana Sahib, Rani of Jhansi, Kunwar

Singh and others. Enough has been said above, in Chapter XVII, to indicate its general characteristics, which may be summed up as follows: First, the civil population in each locality revolted only when the British authority had left it and the administrative machinery had completely broken down. The people came to believe that the British Raj was at an end, and merely took advantage of the political vacuum, thus created, to serve their own material interests. Secondly, there was no co-ordination between the different groups of rebels or their leaders except in the very last phase when they were pushed to the corner by the advancing British army. Thirdly, each group or individual leader fought for self-interest and had no allegiance to a common cause. This is strikingly illustrated by the assumption of supreme authority, by Bahadur Shah, as Emperor of Hindusthan, and Nana Sahib as the Peshwa. Sundry other Chiefs declared themselves rulers in their own localities, and though some of them paid nominal allegiance either to Bahadur Shah or to Nana, they all exercised their authority as independent sovereigns. Fourthly, from the very beginning the goonda elements of the population, and particularly the marauding tribes like Gujars, Ranghars etc. took a prominent part in the local risings. Even the ordinary people were animated more by subversive than constructive activities. The result was that plunder, rapine, massacre and incendiarism, on a large scale, directed against the Europeans as well as Indians, mostly characterized these outbreaks. In addition to these, personal vendetta, a desire to gain by force what was lost by legal process, settling old scores, and satisfying personal grudge played a large part in the popular upsurge almost wherever it occurred.

It would be a travesty of truth to describe the revolt of the civil population as a national war of independence. National it certainly was not, for the 'upsurge of the people' was limited to a comparatively narrow region of India, comprising at best the greater part of U.P. and a narrow zone to its east, west and south. The whole of Bengal, Assam, Orissa, Rajasthan, and greater parts of the Panjāb, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh, as well as the whole of India south of the Narmada hardly witnessed any overt act of rebellion on the part of the people.

But even within the narrow zone where the civil population revolted, there were considerable sections who were friendly to the English. The ruling Chiefs in the East Panjāb,—Maharajas of Patiala, Nabha and Jhind—,Nawab of Karnal, the Sindhia of Gwalior Holkar of Indore, the Nawabs of Bhopal and Jawra, the Rajas of Jhabua and Dhar, and the entire landed aristocracy of Bihar, with very few exceptions, firmly and consistently stood by the British

Government. Even in Awadh and Rohilkhand, several Chiefs, including the Nawab of Rampur, did the same. One of them, Derigbijah (Digbijay?) Singh, gave shelter to Mowbray Thomson, one of the survivors of the Kanpur massacre, at considerable risk to himself.

Even among the sepoys of the affected areas a certain number remained loyal till the last. Outside the Bengal army, native soldiers as a rule remained loyal or at least did not break out into open mutiny. Their number would be considerable, probably not less than the mutinous sepoys. The Sikhs and the Gurkhas not only remained loyal to the British, but actively helped in recapturing, respectively, Delhi and Lakhnau.

The general attitude of the people towards the English, even in the worst affected areas, was not uniformly hostile. Charles Raikes, who was a Judge at Agra during the Mutiny, bears witness to this.[27a] Apart from his own personal knowledge of the good feelings of the people in May, 1857, he refers to Messrs Phillipps and Bramly, civil officers of considerable position and experience at Agra, who traversed the country in June, 1857, from Furrukhabad and Etah in the Doab, and from Budaon in Rohilkhand, with a very small escort of three or four horsemen. They had been travelling for nearly a month amongst the villages, and on their arrival at Agra declared, that "the villagers are all on our side, except some of the Mahomedans" Then Raikes continues:

> "During this same entire month of June, Mr. Arthur Cocks, the Judge of Mynpoorie; Mr. Watson, the Magistrate of Allygurh; Dr. Clark, young Mr. Outram of the Civil Service, Mr. Herbert Harington, and a few others heroically maintained their position, at or near Allygurh, after the mutiny and destruction of the station. It was because the people of the country were with and not against us, that this handful of volunteer horsemen were enabled to hold the post amidst the swarms of mutineers passing up the Grand Trunk Road to Delhi. The same thing went on in August and September; generally wherever the sepoys or low Mahomedan rabble were not, the English were safe, some villagers, robbers by prescription, tradition, birth, and education, turned against us; but after the fall of Delhi, and a short taste of anarchy, the bulk of the people were glad to see white face, even in the person of a revenue collector "

The English-educated classes as a rule not only did not join the movement, but were treated as enemies by the sepoys. This is known from the statements made by two contemporary Bengalis.[28] This view is also supported by Mr. Raikes, who says:

> "During the course of the mutiny numerous English scholars who held offices under our Government came in to us at Agra, from Oudh, Rohilkhand, and the Doab. All evinced a spirit of determined loyalty to their British employers, and many suffered death, merely as English scholars, at the hand of the mutineers. A Bengalee Boboo at Furruckabad or Cawnpore was almost in as great peril as a Christian, so long as those cities were in the hands of the rebels. Not that the Baboo had personally any taste for the honours of martyrdom; for to tell the truth, he was

the veriest coward under the sun, but simply because the sepoy instinctively hated the English scholars, as part and parcel of the English community. But the students of Agra, Furruckabad, Banaras, Delhi or Bareilly, who had been instructed either at the Government or Mission colleges, behaved in a much bolder manner, and often at the risk of their own lives openly declared their adherence to the British cause".[29]

There are no good grounds to suppose that the experience recorded by Raikes was exceptional and not generally applicable to the country as a whole. Reference may be made in this connection to the many stories left on record by the British fugitives themselves, of the sympathy, kindness and active help rendered to them by the Indians, not unoften at grave peril to themselves

In a book called *"Native Fidelity during the Mutiny"*, anonymously published in 1858, numerous instances are given of the help which the Indians offered, even at the risk of their own lives, to the helpless English men, women, and children, and this in many cases saved their lives. It is pleasant to recall that even in those days of fierce hatred and animosity against the Indians in general, liberal-minded Englishmen fully and freely acknowledged this sympathy and friendly attitude of the Indians towards the British.

The London *Times* wrote in July, 1857: "The general population has exhibited rather good-will than hostility towards us and in many cases effectual protection has been afforded to fugitives." Again it wrote: "Out of the whole population of thirty-four millions and a quarter, we do not think more than fifty thousand joined the ranks of the insurgents, and these were headed by chiefs of small note".[30]

Kaye has paid his generous tribute in the following words:—

"But the truth would not be satisfied if it were not narrated here that many compassionate and kindly acts on the part of the natives of the country relieved the darkness of the great picture of national crime Many of the fugitives were succoured by the people in the rural districts through which they passed, and sent on their way in saftey. In this good work men of all classes, from great landholders to humble sweepers took part, and endangered their own lives by saving those of the helpless Christians".

Another most significant fact, vouched for by several contemporary Indian writers, was the positive antipathy felt by a large section of Indians to the rebels; they had suffered so much in their hands that many sincerely prayed to God for the early restoration of British rule. Not only the goonda elements, but even the mutinous sepoys and other rebels, including Chiefs, were guilty of indiscriminate plunder and bloodshed. Many such incidents have been mentioned above. Tantia Topi himeslf has referred to such activities of the sepoys even while they were flying before the English troops.[31]

The following incident is reported in the Parliamentary Papers: "In the district of which Gaya was the capital, a zemindar proclaimed that the British Government was at an end, murdered every villager who opposed him, and parcelled out among his followers estates which did not belong to him. Bands of mutineers roamed at will over the country, plundered, destroyed public buildings, *levied tribute*, and ravished the wives of respectable Hindoos".[32] There are no good grounds to believe that this was an exceptional case.

To complete the picture, reference must be made to the tension between the Hindus and Muslims. Many have cited the outbreak of 1857 as a shining example of the perfect accord and harmony between the two communities.[33] But though the sepoys and the common people of both the communities fought together against the English, we miss that real communal amity which characterizes a national effort. It is a significant fact that the contemporary Englishmen generally regarded the outbreak mainly as a handiwork of the Muslims. Reference may be made to a few opinions out of many. Thus Raikes says: "They (the Muslims) have behaved in the part of India where I had jurisdiction, very ill; so ill indeed that if the rest of the population had sympathized with them, instead of antagonised. I should despair of governing India for the future" He then adds the following in support of his view:

"I cannot give a fairer instance of the difference between the conduct of the Hindoo and Mahomedan people at the time of the mutiny than was afforded in our own court at Agra. We had numerous Mahomedans and Hindoos, with a sprinkling of Christians, at the bar. With one exception, all the Mahomedan pleaders left the court. One of them, Sufdar Ali by name, was hanged by order of Mr. Harington, for plundering the property of an English officer. The rest gave no assistance whatever to us. The Hindoos, on the contrary, exerted themselves to protect and secure the property of their English judges, preserved our horses and moveable property, and did whatever else they could to show their loyalty and affection. The Mahomedans either deserted us or joined the rebels. And so it was all over the North-Western Provinces, a Mahomedan was another word for a rebel".[34]

Raikes is supported by other contemporary Englishmen. Roberts (later Field-Marshal) wrote that he would "show these rascally Musalmans that, with God's help, Englishmen will be masters of India".[35] Mrs. Coopland writes: "As this is completely a Mahomedan rising, there is not much to be feared from the Hindoos of Benaras".[36] Captain P. G. Scot remarks in his Report on the mutiny at Jhansi: "At Nowgong and Jhansi they let the infantry begin the mutiny. I believe the reason was solely that they wished to conceal the character of the movement, *viz.*, its being a Mahomedan one. They were the most blood-thirsty, when the mutiny did break out".[37]

A military officer, who took part in the siege of Delhi, writes: "The Mahomedans were generally hostile to us, the Hindoos much less so". This feeling persisted in the official circle even long after the fall of Delhi. Referring to the city of Delhi, the same writer observes: "It was not till the end of November, that the Hindu portion of the population was allowed to return. No Mahomedans could get in at the gates without a special order, and a mark was set upon their houses and they were required to prove their loyalty before getting back again".[38] Sir Alfred Lyall, at that time a young civilian in the Agra Province, "put the whole rebellion down to the Muhammadans".[39] The whole of the English Press in Calcutta regarded it as a Muhammadan rebellion.[40]

Even Sir Syed Ahmad indirectly admitted the fact when he said: "The Muslims were in every respect more dissatisfied than the Hindus, and hence in most districts they were comparatively more rebellious, though the latter were not wanting in this respect".[41]

Not only the Europeans, but even the Muslims themselves, at least a section of them, believed that they were the senior partner in the great undertaking. This is quite clear from the many Proclamations issued by the Muslim Chiefs who had assumed independent authority in various localities. Reference may be made to the two Proclamations issued by Khan Bahadur Khan of Barelily, whose activities have been described above. Throughout his Proclamations runs the assumption that while the Muslims were exerting themselves to the utmost, the Hindus were lukewarm in their efforts. Accordingly a bait was offered to the Hindus. "If the Hindoos", so runs the Proclamation, "shall exert themselves in the murder of these infidels and expel them from the country, they shall be rewarded for their patriotism by the extinction of the practice of the slaughter of the kine". But it was made abundantly clear that "the entire prohibition of this practice is made conditional upon the complete extermination of the infidels from India. If any Hindoo shall shrink from joining in this cause, the evils of revival of this practice shall recoil upon them".[42]

Thus the great difference between the Hindus and the Muslims loomed large even in the territories where the revolt of the civil population was most widely spread. An attempt was made to minimize the evil by emphasizing the paramount need of unity between the two communities. A Proclamation was issued at Delhi with the royal permission, urging the two communities to unite in the struggle. But the communal spirit was too deeply rooted to be wiped out by mere pious wishes embodied in proclamations. As noted above,[43] there was communal tension even in Delhi, the centre

of the great movement. But it was not confined to that city. We learn from an official report on the night of the mutiny (June, 4) at Varanasi that "news was received that some Mussulmans had determined to raise the Green Flag in the temple of Bishessur... Mr. Lind called on the Rajputs in the city to prevent the insult to their faith. So the Mussulmans retired peacefully."[44]

The communal hatred led to ugly communal riots in many parts of U. P. Green Flag was hoisted and bloody wars were fought between the Hindus and Muslims in Bareilly, Bijnor, Moradabad and other places where the Muslims shouted for the revival of the Muslim kingdom.[45]

The communal discord was supplemented by racial animosity of long standing produced by historical causes. The Muslims in Hyderabad were excited by the events of North India and developed strong anti-British feeling, but they were more hostile to the Marathas and would have gladly fought under the British against Holkar and Sindhia.[46] The Sikhs hated the Mughuls, and joined the British in order to prevent the restoration of Mughul rule under Bahadur Shah. It is on record that high British officials in the Panjāb were able to persuade the Sikhs to cast in their lot with them by describing in vivid language the injuries and insults they had suffered in the past in the hands of the Mughul Emperors. Having impressed this point on their mind, they held out before them the grand opportunity they now had of taking full vengeance. There can be hardly any doubt that the Sikhs were largely influenced by such considerations in wholeheartedly offering their services to the British Government. There are good grounds to believe that the same spirit alienated the Rajputs and the Marathas, as they, too, for historical reasons, did not favour the restoration of the Muslim rule. It is to be noted that none of the Rajputs and Maratha Chiefs responded to the invitation of Bahadur Shah, and all the propaganda in Maharashtra was carried on in the name of Nana.

These considerations, as well as the fact that by far the greater part of India was free from any overt act of hostility against the British Government, divest the outbreak of 1857 of a 'national' character We may now proceed to discuss whether it can be regarded as a war of independence, even though restricted to a limited area. In order to reply to this question, it is necessary to have a clear and definite understanding as to the precise meaning of the phrase 'war of independence.' There are not a few who seem to think that any fight by any group of Indians against the British must be regarded as a struggle for independence. The validity of this contention may be easily tested by the two specific instances of the grim

and prolonged struggle carried on against the British by the Pindaris and the Wahabis, to which reference has been made elsewhere. There is no doubt about the severity of the struggle against the English in each case, backed by an organization to which the outbreak of 1857 could lay no claim. Yet, it would be absurd to maintain that the Pindaris fought for independence of India. As to the Wahabis, they fought heroically against the English with a grim determination to drive them out of India in order to establish a *Dar-ul-Islam*, or 'Kingdom of the Muslims'. They began to fight against the Sikhs with the same object, and when the British conquered the Panjāb from the Sikhs, they simply transferred their hostility against the new power. Now, if we regard their fight against the English as a war of independence, by no logic can we withhold this nomenclature from the fight of the Wahabis against the Sikhs. In other words, we are reduced to the absurd position of regarding a war to drive out the Sikhs from the Panjāb as an Indian war of independence.

These two examples serve to show that merely a fight against the English, even with the distinct object of driving them away, cannot be regarded as an Indian war of independence. The crucial point is the ultimate object with which such a fight is carried on, or rather the light in which the British are looked upon. It is clear that in the first case the British merely constituted a ruling authority, and the Pindaris would have fought in the same way against any Indian ruling power, if it stood in the way of their loot and plunder, as they did with the English. In the second case, the British were simply non-Muslims who had usurped the Muslim kingdom, and the Wahabis would, as they actually did, fight against any non-Muslim power in India with the same zeal as they showed against the English, if the security of religion demanded it. Thus the fight of the Pindaris and the Wahabis against the English cannot be regarded as struggle for independence, because to them the English stood as a symbol, either of ruling authority or of heretic religion, and not merely of an alien rule. In other words, they did not take up arms with the conscious and definite object of freeing India from foreign rule.

An analysis of historical examples would prove that a struggle for independence must have as its primary object the expulsion of foreign rulers, simply because they are foreigners, though there are usually many grievances against them which rouse the spirit of the people and impel them to such a struggle.

In the detailed picture that has been given above of the popular upsurge, even in Rohilkhand and Awadh, two things emerge quite clearly. In the first place, it had nothing to do with the achievement of independence or freedom from British control, for that task

was already done for the people by the mutinous sepoys. If there was any war, it was for maintaining and not gaining independence

Secondly, during the period of independence, thus gained, there is unimpeachable evidence to show that the people were engaged in all kinds of subversive activities, and individuals, classes, and States were fighting with one another for their own interests. On the other hand, one looks in vain for any evidence to show that the civil population realized the value and importance of the recovery of lost independence. and made an organized and determined effort to maintain it by evolving a suitable plan for defence. Anyone with a modicum of knowledge and common sense must have felt, that the avenging British forces were sure to come, sooner or later, to recover the lost dominions. But contemporary evidence leaves no doubt that many eminent leaders and local Chiefs, who had established their authority, discounted even the very possibility of such a contingency.

It is also a very significant fact that all the Proclamations of the Muslim Chiefs in Awadh and Rohilkhand contain an appeal to the Muslims in the name of their religion, and remind them, on their faith in the Qurān, that by fighting against the infidels or paying money to others to fight, they would secure to themselves eternal beatitude. To the Hindus also the appeal was made in the name of their religion, by pointing out how the British Government defiled it by introducing the remarriage of widows, the abolition of *Sati*, etc To the native rulers, too, after referring to the annexation of States, appeal was made in the name of religion. "Their designs for destroying your religion, O Rajas, is manifest... Be it known to all of you that if these English are permitted to remain in India, they will butcher you all and put an end to your religion."[47]

It is quite obvious that the idea of a common national endeavour to free the country from the yoke of the British is conspicuous by its absence in these proclamations. Indeed one could hardly expect such an idea in those days from people of this class.

The Proclamation issued at Delhi by the mutineers with the Royal permission[48] also stressed religion as the guiding force of the movement. Reference may be made in this connection to a Proclamation issued by Nana Sahib which has been regarded as 'unique'.[49] It begins by saying that "the English who are 'Kaffurs' have been endeavouring to delude and convert the population of this country by inducing them to abandon their own religion and caste, but, having failed by mild means to do this, they were about to use force". Then he goes on to say that "tyranny, wickedness and injustice having been much practised by the 'Kaffurs' English on the faithful and sin-

fearing, I have been commissioned by God to punish the 'Kaffurs' by annihilating them and to re-establish the Hindu and Mahomedan kingdoms, as formerly, and to protect our country, and I have conquered the country north of the Nerbuda river". The Proclamation then refers to the very sad plight of the English. Not only did they lose India north of the Narmada, which was conquered by Nana, but they were "quarrelling and fighting and killing each other"; the French and the Russians "have been sending armies by sea these three months past" "to turn them(the English) out of Hindustan"; "the Chinese also have declared war against these 'Kaffurs' and the latter having no army to send against the Chinese are much alarmed. The Persians, Afghans and Baluchis moreover are ready with their armies collected to aid us". This Proclamation only provokes ridicule and contempt by the absurd claims made by Nana, but even taking the best view, Nana here assumes the role of the defender of Hindu religion. As the Proclamation ends with a threat to punish all those who would not join Nana on this occasion to drive away the English, it loses the character of a declaration of war of independence by the people, even if anybody seeks to put this complexion upon it.

There is thus no positive evidence in support of the view that people were inspired by a sense of patriotism to fight for retaining the freedom of the country which they had obtained so cheaply and unexpectedly without having to wage any war. It has been urged that the very fact that the people and the Chiefs fought heroically against the British when the days of retribution came, proves that they fought for independence. But, as has already been pointed out above, mere fight against the British does not constitute a war of independence. One must look to the object of the fight. In the paricular case before us the most obvious inference is that the people fought for retaining what they had wrongfully secured, and avoiding chastisement, unless there is clear evidence to show that they were inspired by patriotism or any such noble and disinterested motive. The protracted or heroic character of the resistance against the avenging British forces cannot, by itself, be regarded as such evidence. For the people had burnt their boats and had only two alternatives before them, either to fight or lose everything, including their lives in many cases. Besides, the incredible and indiscriminate cruelty with which the masses were treated by the British must have told the people what to expect from them, and stiffened their backs.

Until 1957, the view that the outbreak of 1857 was the first national war of independence in India rested generally on sentimental effusion, and was not critically considered with reference to his-

torical facts. In that year an eminent historian, Dr. S. N. Sen, has lent his qualified support to it. As such it deserves a more detailed consideration, even in a general work on Indian history, than would otherwise have been necessary.

Dr. S. N. Sen has observed: "What began as a fight for religion ended as a war of independence for there is not the slightest doubt that the rebels wanted to get rid of the alien government and restore the old order of which the King of Delhi was the rightful representative".[50] It is not quite clear whether this remark applies to the Mutiny or the revolt of the civil population, or both. In any case, it is difficult to accept this view unless we believe that any fight against the English is to be construed as a war of independence, a point that has already been discussed above. Besides, it is to be remembered that when the civil population began to fight against the English, Bahadur Shah had long been a prisoner in the hands of the British, and had even ceased to be a symbol.

Immediately after the sentence quoted above, Dr. Sen observes that "in Oudh, however, the revolt assumed a national dimension", though, as he himself points out, "the term must be used in a limited sense, for the conception of Indian nationality was yet in embryo."[51] The basis for his view is his belief that "the patriots of Oudh fought for their king and country", although, as he admits, "they were not champions of freedom"[52] Unfortunately, he did not develop this very important idea in the body of his book with full reference to facts and figures, but made this remark in the course of a brief review at the very end. In particular, he does not make it quite clear whether he regards the Chiefs and people of Awadh as patriots because they fought for their king and country, or whether he regarded as patriots only those who fought for their king and country. But, then, he does not give us any idea of their number. In any case, the main argument in support of this view seems to be the spirited reply of Muhammad Hasan to the letter of Sheikh Khairuddin.[53] As mentioned above, Hasan maintained that the rebellion of the Chiefs and peoples of Hindustan "arose solely out of the annexation of Oude. Had that not taken place there would have been no bloodshed, because no defection of the Chiefs, who would have on the contrary inflicted chastisement on the sepoys". Later, Hasan maintains that the "servants and dependants of the King of Oude," among whom he includes himself, looked upon the fight against the English as "essential to our prosperity in both worlds". But it is not easy to understand why the princes and people of Hindusthan, living outside the dominion of Awadh, would find themselves in the same predicament. Such a general statement shows that Hasan assumed

the outbreak of 1857 to be a war for independence of Awadh and not of India, and his generalisation, even if restricted to the Chiefs and people of Awadh, may justly be regarded as suspect. We know of another chief, Beni Madho, who, when asked to surrender, agreed to evacuate the fort, presumably because he looked upon it as his property, but refused to surrender his person, as he was a subject of the Nawab of Awadh and not of the British Government. There is nothing to show how far any of them represented correctly the views of the rebels as a body or indeed of any one but himself. But besides these two personal statements there are no other facts or documents to prove that 'the patriots of Oudh' fought for their king and country. On the other hand, there are certain considerations which strongly militate against this view. Only a year before the Mutiny the King of Awadh was ignominiously driven from his country, but 'the patriots of Oudh' did not raise even their little finger on behalf of their king or country. Even if it be assumed that they had developed their love for their king and the country almost overnight, or that the Mutiny gave them an opportunity to display their loyalty and patriotism which they dared not show before, should not one expect to see them all flocking in a body to join the force of the Begam of Awadh and concert measures of defence without any other thought in their minds? But as shown above, this was far from being the case. By far the large majority of the people and chiefs, formed into isolated groups, were busy securing their own interests, and even Hasan himself remained loyal and friendly to the English until, as he says, he received the peremptory command of his Chief. Many, if not most, of the Chiefs threw in their lot with the rebels only when the retreat of Havelock convinced them that the British Raj was doomed.

If one concedes the claim that 'the patriots of Oudh' fought for their king and country alone, they are automatically excluded from the general war of independence, if there were any, outside this area. As Muhammad Hasan clearly says: "My business is with the King of Oude". As regards Rohilkhand, the only other prominent area affected by the revolt, Dr. Sen himself admits that the "masses in the district (of Bijnor) were not behind the revolt, and the movement there had degenerated into communal strife. Moradabad, for all practical purposes, was under the control of the loyal Nawab of Rampur. Even in the rest of the province the new regime was not popular."[54] He accepts the view that the recruits of the rebel chief, Khan Bahadur Khan of Bareilly, "were attracted by prospects of employment and had no enthusiasm for any particular cause. Thousands of poor people flocked to the British camp for the same reason. The common folk went wherever they could find employment".[55]

The state of things in the North-West Provinces, as a whole, as described by him, was not much different, and Bihar was very slightly affected. This detailed analysis as well as that of other parts of India[66] hardly supports his general conclusion about the war of independence. He contends "that only a determined minority takes an active part in a revolt or revolution", and argues, 'that if such minority is backed by the sympathy of a substantial majority the movement may claim a national status.' But he himself adds that such general sympathy was lacking outside Awadh and Shahabad.[67] The case of Awadh has already been discussed. Shahabad is too small an area to decide the question one way or the other.

It would thus appear that the outbreak of the civil population in 1857 may be regarded as a war of independence only if we take that term to mean any sort of fight against the British. But, then, the fight of the Pindaris against the English[68] and the fight of the Wahabis against the Sikhs in the Panjāb should also be regarded as such. Those who demur to it should try to find out how much the rebels in 1857 were prompted by motives of material interest and religious considerations which animated, respectively, the Pindaris and the Wahabis, and how much by the disinterested and patriotic motive of freeing the country from the yoke of foreigners. Apart from individual cases, here and there, no evidence has yet been brought to light which would support the view that the patriotic motive of freeing the country formed the chief incentive to the general outbreak of the people. It is therefore difficult to regard the outbreak of 1857 as a war of independence, far less a national movement of this type, at least in the present state of our knowledge.

In conclusion, attention may be drawn to the rebellion of Surendra Sai at Sambalpur in 1827[69] and that of the Santals in 1856.[60] If the later rebellion of the same Surendra Sai in 1857 for the same cause and carried on in the same manner may be regarded as a war of independence, there is no reason why the earlier rebellion should not be honoured by the same epithet. As regards the Santal rebellion, it would bear comparison with that of Shahabad[61] in 1857-8, as regards the intensity of anti-British spirit, organization, and geographical area. If, therefore, the isolated outbreaks in 1857 in different areas are to be regarded as war of independence, it is difficult to deny the same honour to the arduous struggle carried on by the Santals or Surendra Sai, and perhaps many others described in Chapter XIV. The outbreak of 1857 has, therefore, little claim to be hailed as the first war of independence.

On the whole, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the so-called First National War of Independence of 1857 is neither First, nor National, nor a War of Independence.

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1. The relevant passages from these two British Journals are quoted in the *Krishtadas Pal* (p. 126) by N. Ghosh, as well as in the book (p. 1) referred to in the next footnote.
2. *The Mutinies, the Government and the People* by a Hindu (Calcutta, 1858). Though anonymous, it is now known to be the work of Kishorichand Mitra.
3. *The Mutinies and the People or Statements of Native Fidelity exhibited during the outbreak of 1857-8*, by a Hindu (Calcutta, 1859). Though anonymous, it is now known to be the work of Sambhuchandra Mukhopadhyaya.
4. *Bengal Celebrities*, p. 75.
5. *SAK*, xvi.
6. Jiwanlal Munshi, Moinuddin, and Durgadas Bandyopadhyaya, mentioned above, pp. 506, 510, 519.
7. Jadunath Sarvadhikari, in his Bengali book, *Tirtha-bhramana* (Pilgrimage), gives a long account of the mutiny and describes the oppression of the people by the sepoys in Vanarasi and other neighbouring places.

7a He recorded his impressions in a book entitled *Majha Prabas* (My Journey), which commenced in March, 1857, and took him to various theatres of military operations. I am indebted to Dr. A. D. Pusalker for having translated for me relevant portions of this Marathi book in English.
7b. Griffiths, p. 259.
7c Ibid.
8. Publisher's Note in the Edition of 1947. p. vii.
9. Ms. L., p. 1117. Some extracts are quoted in Kaye-I, 579 and also Majumdar, 184-7.
10 See pp. 582-3.
11 Forrest-II, IV. 153.
12. TB. 263.
13 Majumdar, 126-7.
14. See pp. 505-6
15 Cf. Extracts, D and E, Majumdar, 185-6.
16 *SAK*, 4.
17 *TB*, 121, 191 ff. Roberts-II, 426.
18. The whole question has been discussed in Majumdar, 192 ff. According to *CHBFP* (II 414 ff), the 'curious theory of an alliance between Bahadur Shah and Persia has no historical basis to rest upon, and does not deserve serious consideration'.
19. *SAK*, 4.
20. For the different views about the origin and object of the *chapatis*, cf. Kaye-I, I. 632 ff. and the evidence given during the trial of Bahadur Shah (*TB*). Dr. P.C Gupta has dealt with it in detail in *J.N. Banerjea Volume*, pp. 254-5.
21. *TB*, 253-4.
22. Ms. L. Vol. 725, pp. 387 ff. Also cf. Lawrence's Minute, dated 19 April, 1858, (*AS*. I, 111.).
23. *AS*, I. 111.
24. Kaye—I, I. 653.
25. *BPP*, LXXVI, Part I, p. 63.
26. *TB*, 255.
27. *AS*, I. 110-12.
27a. For his views quoted, cf. Raikes, 156 ff.
28. Durgadas Bandyopadhyaya and Jadunath Sarvadhikari (see f.n., 6 and 7).
29. Raikes, 137.
30. See f. n., 1.
31. For concrete instances, cf. Majumdar, 178.
32. Quoted in Holmes, 451.
33. Cf. Maulana Azad's view in Sen, xvii.
34. Raikes, 175.
35. Roberts—I, 119.
36. Coopland, 104.

37. Forrest—II, IV, Appendix A, p. 1.
38. *Siege*, 279-80.
39. Lovett, *A History of Indian Nationalist Movement*, p. 18.
40. *Canning* (R.I.), 162.
41. *SAK*, 9.
42. Kaye—I, III. 288.
43. See pp. 513-14.
44. Narrative, I. 34.
45. See pp. 519-22.
46. H. G. Briggs, *The Nizam*, II. 84-6.
47. Kaye—I, III. 290 ff. In addition to the two Proclamations of Khan Bahadur Khan of Bareilly, we possess copies of Proclamations issued by Bargis Qadr of Awadh and Liaqat Ali of Allahabad, all urging the Muslims to rise against the English in the name of religion. The Proclamation issued under the seal of Bargis Qadr, Wali of Awadh, addressed to "all the Muslims residing in Oudh, Rampur, Moradabad, etc." begins with a quotation from the Qur'ān from which it draws the conclusion that friendship with Christians is heresy and hence it is a duty of all the Muslims to make themselves inveterate foes of these Christians. Throughout, it contains the exhortation to the Muslims to rise against the English and extirpate them, by holding out the dire consequences that would follow to the Muslims if the English got victory. The Proclamation, issued by Khan Bahadur Khan of Bareilly, appeals to both Hindus and Muslims to protect their religion and property from the Europeans. The other Proclamations are also of a similar character.
48. See p. 513.
49. *Freedom, Bombay*, I. 253. The text of the Proclamation is given on pp. 253-4.
50. Sen, 411.
51. Ibid
52. Ibid, 412.
53. Ibid, 385, ff.
54. Ibid, 409.
55. Ibid, 409-10.
56. Ibid, 407-11.
57. Ibid, 411.
58. This does not, of course, mean that the generality of the people who fought against the English for personal or material interest belonged to the category of the Pindaris. The object is merely to draw attention to the underlying principle by an extreme analogy. But one class of the civil population, who swelled the number of rebels, such as the Gujars, Banjars, Ranghars and other similar predatory tribes, offers a close analogy to the Pindaris.
59. See p. 444.
60. See p. 457.
61. See p. 552

CHAPTER XXI

THE CAUSES OF THE OUTBREAK

1. *Mutiny*

The successful mutiny of the sepoys was the precursor of the outbreak of the civil population. If there were no mutiny, there would have been no revolt. It is, therefore, necessary to find out, first, the causes of the mutiny of the sepoys.

Mention has been made above of the grave discontent and disaffection towards the British rule among all classes of people.[1] There is no doubt that the sepoys were largely affected by them. But in addition there were special grievances felt by the sepoys, as described above.[2] It has also been shown how they gave public exhibition of their strong resentment and disaffection, and not infrequently local units broke out into mutiny.

The sensitiveness of the sepoys to their religious beliefs and practices and the dread of conversion to Christianity worked as a nightmare upon their minds. Several mutinies were caused by such apprehensions, however ill-founded they might be. There can be hardly any doubt that this was the most potent cause of distrust and discontent. In 1856, one year before the Mutiny, the annexation of Awadh served as another serious cause of discontent. The sepoys, who were mostly recruited from Awadh, were provoked, beyond measure, by the unjust and forcible seizure of the State in violation of treaty rights, and considerations of equity, long-standing alliance and never-failing loyalty.

Since the mutiny of 1857 there have been long discussions and much speculation regarding its causes. Among the numerous statements that have appeared regarding the discontent and disaffection of the sepoys, special importance attaches to those of contemporary native officers of the British army. We possess a long memorandum[3] on this subject prepared by Shaikh Hidayat Ali, Subadar and Sirdar Bahadur, Bengal Sikh Police Battalion, which was commanded by Captain T. Rattaray. It is dated 7th August, 1858, and was submitted to the Government of India. Its purport is given below.

In addition to the effect of the Kabul expedition mentioned above,[4] Hidayat Ali laid stress on the following as causes of discontent among the sepoys:

1. Indignation of the sepoys at the annexation of Awadh to which province many of them belonged.

2. When recruiting sepoys after the annexation of the Panjāb, the Government promised both the Sikhs and Muslims that they would not be asked to remove their beard or hair. But, later on, orders were passed for removing them, and those who refused to do so were dismissed.

3. The messing system in jails, forcing the *purdah* ladies to go to the newly built hospital at Shaharanpur, and the general missionary propaganda created alarm and suspicion. The sepoys thought that the missionaries would not have dared to preach such things as giving up *purdah*, early marriage, circumcision, etc. without the consent of the Government.

4. This suspicion was confirmed by the issue of a general order in September, 1856, to the effect that all new recruits must take an oath that they would be prepared to go wherever they were required.

5. Lastly came the greased cartridge which convinced them that the Government was determined to make them lose caste and embrace Christianity.

According to Hidayat Ali, the grievances of the sepoys might be divided into three categories, viz. political or sentimental (No. 1), material (non-payment of extra-allowances), and religious (Nos. 2-5). Without minimising the importance of the first, he leaves no doubt that the main cause was the religious.

Incidents, almost immediately preceding the mutiny, seem to prove it beyond doubt. There was an incipient mutiny at Bolarum near Hyderabad in 1855.[6] Brigadier Mackenzie had issued a cantonment order, prohibiting processions on Sunday, September 23. But as the Muharram procession of the Muslims was due to be taken out on that day, the order was withdrawn. But the new order did not get sufficient publicity and processions were prohibited in many localities. The cavalry men as a protest took the procession along the road on which the Brigadier's house was situated, although this route was prohibited even by the revised order. The Brigadier personally met the processionists and asked them to disperse. The processionists made an insolent reply to the effect that the road was theirs, and the angry Colonel snatched away two of their flags. Shortly afterwards, when he was taking his evening drive along with some ladies and gentlemen, a murderous attack was made on them. It is significant to note that the cavalry men bluntly told a military officer that their religion was dearer to them than their lives, that it had been insulted, and that they would never lay down

their arms until they had brought the Brigadier and the Brigade Major to a court. The sepoys fully shared the general apprehension and suspicion that it was the deliberate object of the Government to convert the Indians into Christianity by subtle means, fair or foul. The danger was specially brought home to them by missionary propaganda within the military cantonments. Col. Wheler, the Commanding Officer of a sepoy Regiment at Barrackpur, used to distribute religious tracts among the sepoys and openly addressed them with a view to proselytise. He is also known to have met the sepoys at his *bungalow* and tried to persuade them to accept Christianity. It is on record that for these kinds of activities he was once violently expelled by the sepoys from their lines, and on another occasion ordered off the parade of a Regiment at Delhi. He wrote to the Christian Tract Society in 1840 that 'he had several applications from different officers for native tracts in order to distribute to the villages through which they were about to march.' Referring to this the *Englishman* of Calcutta, in its issue of 2nd April, 1857, commented as follows: 'Unless we are very greatly misinformed, he continues the practice even with increased zeal to the present day. It was no wonder, therefore, that the men should be in an excited state specially when such efforts at conversion are openly avowed, and that they would discover what they considered a plot to betray them into a loss of caste'.[6] The name of another military missionary, Major Mackenzie, may be referred to in this connection. Sir Thomas Munro raised a strong voice of protest against this business of distributing religious tracts by the military, but the Government did not take the guilty officers to task. No wonder, therefore, that in spite of professions to the contrary, the sepoys would regard the Government as playing false with them and really aiming at their wholesale conversion to Christianity.

In a letter to Lord Canning, dated May 9, 1857, Sir Henry Lawrence gives an account of his conversation with a Brahman Native Officer of Oudh Artillery, who was most persistent in his belief that the Government was determined to make the people of India Christians. He alluded specially to the Order, recently promulgated, to the effect that, 'after the first September, 1856, no native recruit shall be accepted who does not, at the time of his enlistment, undertake to serve beyond the sea whether within the territories of the Company or beyond them'. Lawrence says that with all his arguments and persuasions he was unable to convince the Officer that the Government had no such intention.[7]

This was mainly due to the repeated breaches of pledges by the Government mentioned above.[8] The facts and circumstances

that created in the minds of the people a vague dread of mass conversion to Christianity, strengthened by the letters of Edmond[9] and activities of Wheler, brought home to the mind of the sepoy the grave and imminent peril which threatened their religion.[9a] And this feeling worked upon minds thoroughly disaffected against the British for many years past. A discerning eye could see that the mine was loaded and the train prepared, and the spark might be easily furnished by any inflammable passion.[9b] The story of the greased cartridge supplied the spark and caused an explosion which shook the British Empire in India to its very foundations.

There is hardly any doubt that the story of the greased cartridge was not only the apparent, but also the real, cause of the Mutiny.[9c] All available evidence indicates that it had a tremendous repercussion on the sepoys scattered over this vast country. The story spread like wildfire and produced excitement and consternation all over the sepoy world. There is no doubt that letters were exchanged between sepoys, widely separated in localities far distant from one another. Many of these letters, intercepted by the Government, indicated a strong belief on the part of the sepoys that it was a deliberate device adopted by the Government to destroy their religion, and a grim determination to resist it even at the cost of their lives.

In judging the effect of the story of greased cartridges on the minds of the sepoys, and the justice or reasonableness of their obstinate refusal to use them, we must remember the very essential fact, often ignored, that the story was undoubtedly a true one. The Government as well as the high military officials denied the allegation that the cartridges were prepared with any objectionable materials, but the sepoys refused to believe them. It is now definitely proved that the sepoys were right, and the military officers undoubtedly suppressed the truth,—whether deliberately or through ignorance, it is difficult to say.

In a book entitled "*Mutiny of the Bengal Army*",[10] written by a military official in India immediately after the Mutiny, we read: "The Enfield Rifle required a particular species of cartridge which was greased with lard made from the fat either of hog or ox".

Field-Marshal Lord Roberts states:

"The recent researches of Mr. Forrest in the record of the Government of India prove that the lubricating mixture used in preparing the cartridges was actually composed of the objectionable ingredients, cow's fat and lard, and that incredible disregard of the

soldiers' religious prejudices was displayed in the manufacture of these cartridges".[11]

Reference may be made in this connection to a letter written on March 23, 1857, by Anson, the Commander-in-Chief at the time of the Mutiny, to Lord Canning. "I am", says he, "not so much surprised at their (sepoys') objections to the cartridges, having seen them. I had no idea they contained, or rather are smeared with such a quantity of grease, which looks exactly like fat".[12] When the sepoys were forced to taste this abhorrent mixture, it is hardly a wonder that they broke into mutiny. Lecky has very properly observed that "English writers must acknowledge with humiliation that if mutiny is ever justifiable, no stronger justification could be given than that of the Sepoy troops".[13] Though many eminent British officials have admitted that the cartridge question was the immediate cause of the Mutiny, others have sought to cloud the real issue by bringing forward other factors. Some have stressed the defects in the military organization such as the relaxed discipline, lack of intimate personal touch between the sepoys and their officers, the considerable curtailment of the power of the latter over the former due to recent change of regulations, removal of regimental officers to staff and civil employments, the paucity of European troops, the new system of the recruitment of sepoys by which each regiment was filled in with the members of a few families, and the inferior and humiliating position of the sepoys and their native officers. Some have regarded the sepoys as mere tools of reactionary Brahmans and designing politicians; others have laid emphasis on the annexation of Awadh. All these and other causes of discontent, mentioned above, were undoubtedly contributory causes that facilitated the outbreak, but it may be reasonably doubted whether there would have been a general mutiny, if there were not the question of greased cartridges.

As a matter of fact, so far as public records are available, it is only this ground which the sepoys repeatedly urged before their superior officers as the cause of their discontent, and it was only in relation to those cartridges that they showed open defiance against their officers. The other causes might be regarded as, more or less, contributory, in a rather remote sense, but the direct and the most important cause must have been the religious scruples to which the Hindus and Muslims are peculiarly sensitive. There is no reason to think that the sepoys were animated, at least to begin with, either by any nationalist sentiments or by a sense of patriotism, or, even by any strong desire to restore the Mughul rule in India. The last one might have been added at a later stage. but

at the beginning of the outbreak it did not play any part in exciting the sepoys. The utmost that can be said is that in their excitement over the greased cartridges they might have imbibed some sort of a blind fury against the British, and a determination to drive them and to destroy their rule and authority in India. But there was nothing new in such attitude, and the cry of 'drive away the feringhees' was raised in Awadh, the centre of the Mutiny of 1857, as far back as the days of Chait Singh (1781). But the conduct of the mutinous sepoys towards the Indians, to which detailed reference has been made above,[14] belies the theory that they were actuated by any patriotic motive and nationalist sentiment. It is significant that all the contemporary Indian writers, without any exception, have represented the sepoys as enemies of the people, and not as patriotic fighters for their country's freedom. These writers leave no doubt that the sepoys were dreaded, not loved, by the general population.[15]

Of all the Indian witnesses who deposed at the trial of Bahadur Shah, Ahsanulla seems to have been the most straightforward and best informed. Being a confidential physician of the King, he had ample opportunities of knowing the facts, and his long detailed statement has a ring of truth. His views therefore carry special weight. Among other things he said:

> "The mutinous troops would not appear to have won over the people of the country, because if they had, they would have treated them with consideration, and would not have oppressed and plundered them as they did. The sepoys had not, before their breaking out into mutiny, united to themselves the Mussalman population of Delhi. If they had, they would not have oppressed and plundered the Mohammedans of Delhi in the manner they did. The abandoned classes of the city required no instigation to rise up. The confusion and disorder of the time in itself encouraged them to unite with the sepys".[16]

There might have been individual sepoys who were animated by high and noble motives, but as a class they cannot be regarded as a band of patriots or nationalists fighting for their country.

2. *The Outbreak of the Civil Population*

One might regard it as a somewhat strange phenomenon that although there was no general conspiracy or organization, the mutiny of sepoys should have been followed by a popular rising on a wide scale, at least in certain areas. A variety of reasons have therefore been assigned for the outbreak. Some of these are puerile in the extreme, such as Russian intrigue, divine punishment for not spreading Christianity, and belief in a prophecy that the British empire would come to an end after 100 years. Others are merely guessworks such as the Muslim conspiracy to restore the Mughul Empire

and Brahman conspiracy to retain their power. The real cause is, however, not far to seek.

There is a French proverb that if you want to seize a murderer look for the woman behind the crime. Similarly if you want to go to the root of a revolt, look for the elements of discontent and disaffection among the people. These have been described in detail in Chapter XIII.

It is not necessary in the present context to discuss whether or how far the discontent was reasonable and justified. But that it was genuine and profound is proved by a deep-seated hatred against the British among nearly all classes of people. Many Englishmen could discern this long before 1857. Bishop Heber wrote in 1824 that the "natives of India do not really like us...if a fair opportunity be offered, the Mussalmans, more particularly, would gladly avail themselves of it to rise against us".[17] The Government seems to have been fully aware of this fact, for Lord William Cavendish Bentinck, the Governor-General of India, in a minute dated 13 March, 1835, refers to the peril of the British Government in India "when one hundred millions of people are under the control of a Government which has no hold whatever on their affections".[18] Many other Englishmen have testified to this state of feeling from their own experience and observation. Nothing perhaps illustrates this spirit of hatred better than the following story recorded by Mrs. Coopland. "An Officer, when trying the prisoners, asked a sepoy why they killed women and children. The man replied: 'When you kill a snake, you kill its young' ".[19]

But neither discontent nor hatred, by itself, leads to an outbreak. A suitable opportunity is necessary for their manifestation in overt acts. Such an opportunity presented itself when the sepoys, the chief prop of the British power in India, openly broke out into mutiny and seemed to hold their ground against their late masters. It was not till then that all the latent or pent-up feelings could be canalised into revolutionary activities by local leaders to serve their own interests.

That the course of events actually followed the line implied in this supposition has been made abundantly clear in Chapters XVII, XVIII, and XX. Thus the successful mutiny of the sepoys may be looked upon as the direct and proximate cause of the revolt of the people. The elements of discontent and various other so-called causes[20] were merely the conditions favourable to the origin of the revolt; in other words, they made the revolt not only a possibility but a very probable contingency. Some of these conditions were also conducive to the development and temporary success of the revolt.

They not only sustained the movement but supplied the dynamic force to its progress.

Among these contributing causes or favourable conditions emphasis has justly been laid by contemporary and later writers upon the dread of a mass conversion of both Hindus and Muslims to Christianity. It has already been pointed out, that the Indians had very reasonable grounds for such a fear, and that they were very seriously perturbed by the dreadful prospect. Almost all the proclamations which were issued by the rebellious chiefs laid special emphasis on this point, and the action of the sepoys shows the extent to which it must have affected the minds of all classes of Indians. Even if we admit that there were designing persons who acted upon this fear of the public to serve their own personal political ends, we indirectly acknowledge the truth of the view that the fear of losing caste and religion was one of the most potent factors in the general revolt of the civil population. It cannot be denied also that material grievances[21] under which the people smarted and the hope of material gain served as a great incentive. The noble and patriotic idea of securing freedom from alien rule might have inspired individuals, but there is no reason to suppose that it served as an incentive to the people at large. It should be remembered that the ideas of patriotism and nationalism in the sense in which they are used now were conspicuous by their absence among the Indian masses in 1857.

It is not difficult to trace the stages by which the passive discontent and disaffection of the people were transformed to active rebellion. A contemporary observer, Charles Raikes, to whom reference has been made above, has analyzed the situation in North-Western Provinces somewhat as follows:[21a]

"Now of these sixteen millions (of people in N.W.P.) not one-twentieth part resided in districts which had any European soldiers stationed within their limits. The mass of the people knew and acknowledged the supreme power of their English masters, but they attributed that power entirely to the bayonets of the Bengal Native Infantry, which held the forts, arsenals, and treasuries throughout the country Therefore, when the native soldiers rose, as one man, to burn and slay, to pull down the halls of justice, and to break open the jails, the people at large, who knew little and thought less of the distant resources of England, concluded naturally enough that our day had gone by

"The catastrophe was viewed with very different feelings by the various bodies of our quondam subjects 'The predatory class, the Goojurs, the Mewatties, felt instinctively that their day had come. Their natural enemy, the Magistrate, had perished at the hands of the mutineers, or was flying before them, protected only by the people over whom he lately presided. Forthwith, they girded on the sword and buckler, seized the matchlock and sallied forth to pursue their hereditary vocation of plunder. In pursuit of this instinct they played no partizan's part, but with the utmost impartiality robbed alike the straggling European running for his life, or the sepoy carrying off his booty As a matter of course, there was an

end of police, telegraph, postal communication, and every other symptoms of civilisation, wherever these harpies were found.

"The green flag of Islam, too, had been unfurled. The mass of the Muslim community 22, rejoicing to believe that under the auspices of the great Mogul at Delhi their lost ascendency was to be recovered, their deep hatred to the Christian got vent, and they rushed forth to kill and destroy.

"But, making deduction for these classes, the great agricultural communities, the Jat, the Brahmin, the Rajpoot, looked on the English race, under whose auspices they had so long tasted peace and security, with unfeigned compassion. Like the robber tribes, they considered our case hopeless, but unlike them they at first lamented lost order. Such was their first impulse; they showed it in a hundred instances, by helping our straggling countrymen, and protecting them from Sepoys or rabble, often at the risk of their own lives. But as the course of events hurried on, as Magistrate, Cutcherry, revenue process, subsided alike, these men, who, as forming the bulk of the agricultural class, had been saddled with a very full share of the public imposts, began to think it no bad change if only they could avoid revenue payments for the future. In common with the rest of the mankind they were not fond of paying taxes, nor were they long disconsolate when the tax-collector disappeared from the scene If there was no Government, there was no quarter-day. It requires no special knowledge of India to comprehend the rapid spread of passive disaffection (not active hostility), under such circumstances as these. When disaffection means more money, more power, and no taxes, its growth is a mere necessity of human nature".

There is one grave defect in this otherwise brilliant analysis, namely, that Raikes has not given sufficient importance to the already existing discontent and disaffection of the people, leading to the hatred of the British. The successful mutiny undoubtedly gave the needed opportunity, but it certainly would not have been availed of to the extent that it actually was, unless there were grave discontent and disaffection of the people. But Raikes seems to have accurately marked the gradual stages of development. Confirmation and illustration of his views meet us at almost every step as we read the detailed account of the civil rebellion in different localities. It is fully confirmed by the Rani of Jhansi herself, who was not only faced with the revolt of the local chiefs, but had to fight against a neighbouring ruler who took advantage of her difficulties to feed fat an old grudge and invaded Jhansi. Such was the state of things in what is regarded as one of the centres of India's first War of Independence.

As noted above, it was mainly in Awadh and Rohilkhand, which formed a part of Awadh until its Nawab was forced to cede it to the British, that the popular upsurge reached its maximum momentum. This is easily accounted for by the annexation of Awadh and the circumstances attending it to which reference has been made above. All this sorely wounded the sentiments of all classes of people and seriously affected the vested interests of the Chiefs, *Talukdars* and scions of the royal family. These were recent events, hardly a year

old, and the strong discontent and severe resentment felt by the people were therefore very keen and quite fresh.

If the outbreak of popular revolt in Awadh may be easily accounted for by these special circumstances, two others gave it a vitality and momentum which are found nowhere else. The first is the possession of forts and armed retainers by the Chiefs and *Talukdars* which emboldened them to break into revolt and enabled them to carry on a sustained struggle.

The second is the famous Proclamation of Canning which, though drafted earlier, was issued immediately after the British had recaptured Lakhnau. As noted above,[23] this Proclamation decreed the confiscation of the lands of all the *Talukdars* and land-lords, with the exception of only six, specifically named. As General Innes observed: "Lord Canning raised the whole province *gratuitously* and *needlessly* into *desperate hostility*. The chiefs rose *en masse* in active rebellion." [24] The view that the Proclamation caused the rebellion of the *Talukdars* is not true, but there is no doubt that the threat of confiscation embittered the feelings of the Chiefs and led them to offer a desperate resistance to which they would not have probably been otherwise goaded. Outram, the Chief Commissioner of Awadh, was of the same view. He declared "that if nothing more than their lives and freedom from imprisonment were offered, they would be driven to wage a guerilla war, whereas if the possession of their lands were guaranteed to them, they would assist in restoring order" [25] Dr. Sen also observes: "Outram did his best to conciliate the people threatened with confiscation but they had as yet no reason to place their faith in British justice; and British mercy to them was a fiction. To lose their land was to live without honour and the talukdars determined to fight for their barony as their ancestors had done in the days of the Nawabs. Hostilities at once broke out afresh and over a much wider area than before".[26] It would thus appear that the heroic resistance of the Chiefs and people of Awadh were not mainly, far less solely, due to the solicitude for their king and country, and the number of 'patriots' who fought for them alone could not be very large. The true situation in Awadh seems to have been best realized in the most unexpected quarter. On April 19, 1858, Lord Ellenborough, the President of the Board of Control, wrote a long and spirited letter to Canning, full of adverse—almost caustic—comment on his Proclamation. The following extracts quoted from it may be read with interest:

"We cannot but express to you our apprehension that this decree, pronouncing the disinheritance of a people, will throw difficulties almost insurmountable in the way of the re-establishment of peace. We are under the impression that the war

in Oudh has derived much of its popular character from the rigorous manner in which, without regard to what the chief land-holders had become accustomed to consider as their rights, the summary settlement had, in a large portion of the province, been carried out by your officers.

"The landholders of India are as much attached to the soil occupied by their ancestors, and are as sensitive with respect to the rights in the soil they deem themselves to possess, as the occupier of land in any country of which we have a knowledge.

"Whatever may be your ultimate and undisclosed intentions, your proclamation will appear to deprive the great body of the people of all hope upon the subject most dear to them as individuals, while the substitution of our rule for that of their native sovereign, has naturally excited against us whatever they may have of national feeling.

"We cannot but in justice consider that those who resist our authority in Oude are under very different circumstances from those who have acted against us in provinces which have been long under our government. We dethroned the king of Oude and took possession of his kingdom. Suddenly the people saw their king taken from amongst them, and our administration substituted for his, which, however bad, was at least native; and this sudden change of government was immediately followed by a summary settlement of the revenue, which, in a very considerable portion of the province, deprived the most influential landholders of what they deemed to be their property; of what certainly had long given wealth, and distinction, and power to their families.

"We must admit that under these circumstances, the hostilities which have been carried on in Oude have rather the character of legitimate war than that of rebellion, and that the people of Oude should rather be regarded with indulgent consideration than made the subjects of a penalty exceeding in extent and in severity almost any which has been recorded in history as inflicted upon a subdued nation."[27]

This letter of Ellenborough cost him his high office. It might have been injudicious and against convention, but it certainly blurted out the truth, a rare thing in British official correspondence.

We may sum up the views, stated above, in the shape of the following propositions.

1. If there had not been the sudden, and perhaps unpremeditated, rising of the sepoys at Mirat on May 10, 1857, there would not probably have been any Sepoy Mutiny, at least at the time and in the form in which it occurred.

2. If there had been no Sepoy Mutiny, there would have been no outbreak of the civil population.

3. This outbreak or popular revolt was the direct outcome of the initial success of the Mutiny, and was fed by the volume of discontent and resentment existing against the British, and facilitated by other circumstances.

4. Although these factors sustained the general revolt, it was originally inspired, in the main, by the considerations of personal

advantages of individuals or material interests of groups who took the initiative.

5. The extent and character of the popular revolt was determined to a large extent by local conditions and the personality of leaders

6. The movement of 1857-8 comprised several distinct elements, such as the mutiny of sepoys, sporadic outburst of civil commotion, organized outbreak by predatory tribes and goonda elements, and the popular revolt, in some cases partaking of the character of a legitimate warfare. But as there was no coherence among them, each being limited in extent and objectives, and there was no definite plan, method, or organization, it cannot be regarded as a national rising, far less a war of independence, which it never professed to be.

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1. Cf Chapter XIII.
2 See pp. 424-33
3 MS L Vol 727, pp 759-68.
4 See p 187
5 Sen, 13
6 Quoted in SB—II, 3.
7. Roberts—II, 436 f n
8 See p 432
9. See p 420
9a Whether the apprehensions of the sepoys were well-founded or not—evidence now available shows that they were not—they were real and very widely spread The men of the 34th N I, with whom the whole trouble began, were almost convinced that they would sooner or later be converted to Christianity It was said that Lord Canning, the Governor-General, left England under a pledge to Lord Palmerston that he would do his best to convert the whole of the native population of India (*The Times*, 10 June, 1857). A correspondent from N W P wrote to the *Englishman* of Calcutta (1 May, 1857). "All classes of natives imagine that they were to be converted by force Amongst the native soldiery this erroneous imagination dangerously exists". (Quoted by Dr. P C. Gupta in *J. N Banerjea Volume* pp 262-3)
9b Captain Martineau wrote to one of his colleagues on 5 May, 1857: "I am afraid to say I can detect the near approach of the storm...but can't say how, when or where it will break forth here are all the elements of combustion at hand, 100,000 men, sullen, distrustful, fierce with all their deepest and inmost sympathies as well as worst passions roused and we thinking to cajole them into good humour by patting them on the back and saying, what a fool you are for making such a fuss about nothing. They no longer believe us, they have passed out of restraint and will be off at a gallop before long" (Home Miscellaneous Series, Vol. 725, pp. 1015-54), quoted by P. C. Gupta in *J N. Banerjea Volume*, p. 264.
9c This point has been fully discussed in Majumdar, pp 247 ff Cf. also P. C. Gupta, op cit 260, which also gives the history of the Grease Question from 1854
10. It was published in London in 1857 and is generally known as the *Red Pamphlet* The passage quoted occurs in p. 8.
11 Roberts—II, 431.
12. Ibid, 49, f n Kaye—I, I. 558 f n. For other views on this subject, cf. SB—II 5, f n 1
13 Lecky, *The Map of Life* (1900), p 98
14. See pp. 506-10, 519-20, 615.
15 See pp 603-4.
16 TB, 225.

17. Quoted by Yusuf Ali, *A Cultural History of India during the British Period*, p. 182.
18. *Bentinck* (R.I.), p. 179.
19. Coopland, 234.
20. These causes are enumerated by various writers. Cf. Holmes, Appendix U, pp. 630 ff. For the long list of Norton, cf. Majumdar, 260-1. Mr. Martin has given a list of the causes leading to the outbreak. These include, among others, oppressive and pauperising tenure of land, free press, inefficient administration of justice, exclusion of natives from all shares in the Government, aversion of Englishmen to the natives, recent annexations, western education, missionary operations, Muhammadan conspiracy, and Russian and Persian intrigues.
21. These have been discussed in detail in Chapter XIII.
21a. Raikes, 156 ff.
22. The actual words used by Raikes are likely to wound the religious susceptibilities of the Muslims; hence I have changed them.
23. See p. 514.
24. Innes, *Lucknow and Oude in the Mutiny* (1895), p. 291. The Italics are mine.
25. *CHI*, VI. 200.
26. Sen, 244.
27. Imlah, A. H., *Lord Ellenborough*, p. 255. Parliamentary Papers, 1857-58, XLIII (265) pp. 4-5.

CHAPTER XXII

THE CAUSES OF FAILURE

Whatever one may think of the nature of the outbreak in 1857, there is no doubt that it constituted a grave peril for the British dominion in India. The sepoys, trained and equipped by British officers, exceeded the European soldiers in numerical strength in proportion of seven to one. The sudden and unexpected rising of the sepoys forced the British officials, civil and military, to leave Awadh and Rohilkhand which passed almost entirely out of British control. The civil population of a wide-spread region also rose in revolt. Almost everything was in favour of the Indians. The British Government in India could not hope to muster, by all possible endeavours, and within a reasonable period, more than a combined force of Europeans and Indians, which in any case would be far inferior in number to the opposing sepoys. Even within this tiny force of the Government, the allegiance of a large element of Indians was at best doubtful. Further, while the Indian forces gained accession of strength by fresh mutinies and outbreaks following one another in rapid succession, the British authorities had their meagre resources crippled by the constant endeavour to keep in check the prospective mutineers, and their plans and schemes were foiled by fresh mutinies and outbreaks cropping up at unexpected places. It was a very difficult task for them to maintain communication with distant centres, as the people of the intervening regions, at least some sections of them, were often openly hostile. The triumph of the British in the face of all these handicaps is indeed a great marvel, and it is, therefore, necessary, to inquire into the causes of the failure of the revolution.

The most important cause was the lack of a general plan and a central organization guiding the whole movement. A number of isolated outbreaks without any link or common plan between them could hardly succeed against the British forces, directed with a strong will and determination by a central organization which could command the resources of India, and later, of Britain.

Nothing illustrates more forcibly the great contrast between the unity of command on the side of the British, and the utter lack of it on the other side, than the successful relief of Lakhnau and recovery of Kanpur by the British, and the lack of any effort to relieve the siege of Delhi by Nana or any other leader. It is admitted on

all hands that Delhi could not have been captured by the British without the constant flow of men and equipment from the Panjāb; yet the only communication between the Panjāb and Delhi was along a narrow track to the north-west of Delhi running along the border of U.P., the region most affected by the revolutionary spirit. If there were a well-knit organization in U.P., not to speak in India as a whole, or some able military leader in this region, serious efforts should have been made to intercept the flow of men and equipments from the Panjāb to Delhi. But very little was done in this respect.[1] Similarly, no earnest effort was made to prevent the British troops coming from Calcutta to the west. Danapur and Mirat were the only two cantonments with British troops between the borders of Bengal and the Panjāb. The overwhelming number of sepoys in the intervening region, backed by the sympathy and support of the general people, had a unique opportunity of keeping them separate, but they did not care to utilize it.

The inferiority in generalship, strategy, military skill, and discipline of the mutineers was another important cause of the failure of the outbreak. It is only necessary to contrast the siege of Delhi with that of Kanpur, Lakhnau, and Arrah to prove this point. Delhi was a walled city with good fortifications, and was defended by a large army, fully equipped, and with free communication with the outside territory. Yet it fell after a siege of four months. At Kanpur, the English took shelter in an improvised camp with a frail entrenchment hastily thrown up. The besieged garrison consisted of a few civilians, a small band of faithful sepoys, and about four hundred English fighting men, more than seventy of whom were invalids. The besieging army, on the other hand, numbered some three thousand trained soldiers, well fed, well lodged, well armed and supplied with all munitions of war, aided by the retainers of Nana Sahib and supported by the sympathies of a large portion of the civil population. In spite of all this, Nana, who is credited with great leadership and organizing ability, failed to reduce the place during twenty days, and at last accomplished by treachery what his valour and heroism failed to achieve. At Arrah the small garrison of 50 Sikhs and 15 Europeans and Eurasians[2] defended themselves in a small building, originally intended for a billiard room, and held out against the attack of Kunwar Singh at the head of 'some two thousand sepoys and a multitude of armed insurgents, perhaps four times the number of the disciplined soldiery'.[3] The successful resistance of the garrison at the Residency in Lakhnau against enormous odds for a long period is only too well-known and has been described above.[4] Here, again, in a hastily improvised

defence post, the British had less than seventeen hundred soldiers, a large proportion of which were sepoys, some of whom were regarded with suspicion, while others were infirm old men. They were besieged by at least six thousand trained soldiers, who were soon reinforced by a large and constantly increasing number of *Talukdars* and their retainers till the number exceeded one hundred thousand. At a later stage, Outram successfully defended Alambagh with four thousand four hundred and forty-two men, against this vast enemy force, nearly thirty times in number, and the besieged Residency also successfully held out from the beginning of July, 1857, to September 25, when Havelock joined the garrison, and again till the middle of March, 1858, when it was finally relieved. The heroic defence of Lakhnau Residency shows the British valour, heroism, resourcefulness and strategy at their best, and those of the Indians at their worst. The prolonged siege of Lakhnau kept inactive many thousands of sepoys and armed soldiers who might have been more fruitfully employed elsewhere, e.g., preventing the advance of Neill and Havelock, thereby possibly turning the scale of the whole operation in their favour.

The long and heroic resistance of Lakhnau Residency offers a great contrast to that of the strong forts of Jhansi and Gwalior. The garrison at Jhansi numbered some ten thousand Bundelas and Velaitees and fifteen hundred sepoys. When Sir Hugh Rose invaded the city and fort on March 22, 1858, with his small force of about two thousand, the Rani and her followers must have been astounded at his daring. The Rani heroically defended it till March 31, when Tantia Topi arrived with twenty thousand men to relieve the town. In spite of the magnitude of the peril Sir Hugh did not lose heart. He left a part of his small army to continue the siege and attacked Tantia Topi with the rest. Tantia was defeated on April 1, and fled across the Betwa, being hotly pursued by the British cavalry. On April 3, Sir Hugh entered the fort by direct assault, and next evening the Rani stole out of the fort with a few attendants. It was a signal for a general retreat, and on the 6th the British forces were masters of the city and the fort. It is very surprising indeed that while Tantia had attacked the besieging British army from the rear, and the major part of this small force was engaged in fighting with his twenty thousand men, the troops inside the fort, more than ten thousand in number, did not make a sortie and try to destroy the small British army, less than a thousand in number, left before the fort. One wonders what more favourable situation than this could the besieged expect for ultimate success against the British or as a means of immediate relief?

The defeat and flight of Tantia and the fall of the strong fort of Jhansi illustrate the hopeless inferiority of the Indians both in defensive war and pitched battles. To a large extent this inferiority in military skill rendered useless some strategic moves on the part of the sepoys. This was well illustrated in the early days of the Mutiny when the sepoys advanced from Delhi to check the progress of the troops from Mirat towards that city. The plan was well conceived and the sepoys occupied a strategic position, but they were successively defeated at the battles on the Hindun on May 30 and 31, and again at Badli-ka-Serai on June 8, although their number and artillery were superior to those of the enemy. The same story was repeated at Najufgarh when they tried to intercept the siege-train sent from the Panjāb.

The successive victories of Hayelock on his way from Allahabad to Kanpur also reveal in a striking manner the superior skill and morale of British troops. He had a thousand European infantry soldiers, one hundred and thirty Sikhs and a little troop of volunteer cavalry consisting of eighteen horsemen, and was on the way joined by Reinaud's small detachment. Though his troops were weary and footsore, he won four successive battles against fresh forces of the enemy. In the last battle near Kanpur Nana himself led his force, five thousand strong, and occupied a very strong strategic position prepared beforehand. Nevertheless the daring, valour and superior skill of the English won for them a brilliant victory. Nana's last battle ended in disaster and the loss of Kanpur.

The strength and weakness of the Indian leaders are best illustrated by the campaigns of the Rani of Jhansi and Tantia after the fall of Jhansi, which have been described in detail above.[5] In spite of successive defeats, the Rani and Tantia conceived the bold plan of seizing the fort of Gwalior. It was a master stroke of strategy, the best that the Indian leaders showed during the whole campaign. But though they easily seized Gwalior with the help of Sindhia's troops who deserted their master in the battlefield and joined them, the failure to take proper measures to arrest the progress of the British army showed a deplorable lack of military strategy and foresight. The surrender of such a strong fort, at the very first assault, practically without any resistance, can only be described as most ignominious.

The Indians, no doubt, scored some little successes now and then, mainly due to their superior numbers and tactical advantage. Illustrations are afforded by the reverses sustained by the small reconnoitring forces of Lawrence at Chinhut near Lakhnau, and the croops of Dunbar at Arrah, as well as the defeat of Windham at

Kanpur and Le Grand near Jagdishpur.[6] Both Kunwar Singh and Tantia Topi also displayed skill and energy, specially in guerilla warfare. But taking into consideration not only the episodes referred to above, but also the military campaigns as a whole, narrated in Chapters XVI, XVII and XVIII, it seems to be quite clear that the Indian sepoys, bereft of their European officers, were no match for the British troops, either European or Indian.

Finally, the failure of the great outbreak must be chiefly attributed to the absence of a great leader, who could fuse the scattered elements into a consolidated force of great momentum, with a definite policy and plan of action. History shows that genuine national movements have seldom failed to throw up such a leader in the course of their progress, not unoften even from most unexpected quarters. Unfortunately, no such leader arose in India during the great outbreak of 1857-8, perhaps because it was not a national movement, in the true sense of the term.

Nana Sahib, Bahadur Shah, Rani Lakshmibai of Jhansi and Kunwar Singh are popularly regarded as great leaders of the 1857 movement. Of these the first, though best known and most talked of, seems to be least deserving of the high honours usually bestowed upon him. As we have already seen, there is nothing to show that he organized a great political movement, and even if he attempted to do so, he achieved no conspicuous success. As a military commander he was an absolute failure, as is proved by his inability to reduce Kanpur and defeat in the hands of Havelock near the city. The part he played in dissuading the sepoys from proceeding to Delhi, and his subsequent activities indicate his narrow and selfish outlook and vainglorious attitude. On the whole, there is nothing in the life and death of Nana Sahib which entitles him to the rank of a hero, a martyr, or a great leader. Enough has already been said of Bahadur Shah to indicate that he was even worse than Nana, and not only absolutely worthless, but also a traitor to the cause he professed to serve. There is, however, one common point to be considered about them. Greatness was forced upon them, and they had to accept it much against their will. This is certainly true in regard to Bahadur Shah, and probably true also of Nana. That might soften one's judgment about them, but does not take away from their lack of qualification as leaders.

The Rani of Jhansi undoubtedly stands on a far different footing. Once she decided to rise against the English, she showed unbounded energy and resolution, combined with heroism and daring which we miss in Nana. But we cannot regard Rani Lakshmibai as having organized the great revolt, or played the part of its leader

Her activities were confined to a narrow area and extended over a very brief period, towards the end of the movement. Even then she achieved no conspicuous success against the British on the battle-field, and cannot be said to have contributed, in any substantial measure, to the cause of the Indians. Her title to fame rests more upon her personal character than upon her outstanding position as a great political or military leader.

The position of both Kunwar Singh and Tantia Topi is analogous to that of the Rani of Jhansi. They obtained more successes against the English in the battlefield and carried on more vigorous and prolonged campaigns. But their activities also were confined within narrow limits, and none of them has any claim to be regarded as a leader of the movement of 1857 in any sense of the term. Nor had they contributed anything substantial to shaping the general course of the great movement.

The most glaring fact to be noted in this connection is that though the revolt was most widely spread in Awadh, there was not a single leader who exercised any control over the vast but scattered rebel forces, or had any voice in shaping the general course of the great movement Neither Maulavi Ahmadulla nor the Begam of Awadh, nor any of the heroic *Talukdars* or Chiefs can really claim such a position.

To the lack of leadership must be attributed the serious, almost incredible errors committed by the sepoys which in *many* cases saved the British from great disasters. Devout Englishmen could only explain them as divine dispensation.[7] Sir Henry Lawrence observed:

"Many thoughtful and experienced men now in India believe that it has only been by a series of miracles that we have been saved from utter ruin. It is no exaggeration to affirm that in many instances the mutineers seemed to act as if a curse rested on their cause. Had a single leader of ability arisen among them, nay, had they followed any other course than that they did pursue in many instances, we must have been lost beyond redemption. But this was not to be".[8]

The failure of the outbreak may also be attributed to the fact that neither the leaders, nor the sepoys and the masses were inspired by any high ideal. The lofty sentiments of patriotism and nationalism, with which they are credited, do not appear to have had any basis in fact. As a matter of fact, such ideas were not yet familiar to Indian minds. A strong disaffection and hatred towards the English, and hopes of material gain to be accrued by driving

them out, were the principal motives which inspired and sustained the movement. The spirit of defending religion, which kindled the fire, soon receded into the background, and though it formed the slogan or war-cry for a long time, a truly religious inspiration was never conspicuous as a guiding force of the movement. On the other hand, the British were inspired by the patriotic zeal for retaining their empire and profoundly moved by the spirit of revenge against the Indians who had murdered their women and children.

But even though, for reasons aforesaid, the great outbreak of 1857 ended in failure, it would be a mistake to minimize its importance, or underrate the gravity of its danger to the British. In spite of all their defects and drawbacks, the sepoys and Indian rebels, by their number and favourable situation, threatened to destroy the whole fabric of the British empire. Its fate hung on a thread as it were, and it was almost a touch and go.

In Indian rulers like Sindhia and Nizam joined the Mutiny, the consequences might have been very serious to the British. Lord Canning is reported to have said that "if Sindhia joins the rebels I will pack off tomorrow". A contemporary Englishman referred to the general feeling that "if Hyderabad had risen we could not escape insurrection practically over the whole of Deccan and Southern India". The same writer continues: "Similarly the situation would have been very critical if there were no friendly ruler in Nepal. Lastly, we must also acknowledge with thankfulness the debt we owe to the educated natives".[9]

There is a great deal of truth in all this. In particular, the lack of interest shown by the intellectuals in the movement was a serious drawback, the full extent of which will perhaps never be known. History of modern times shows that all great political movements have an intellectual background and draw their nourishment largely from that source. The outbreak of 1857 not only lacked any such intellectual background but ran counter to the views of the intellectual classes who never looked upon it with sympathy.[10]

The outbreak of 1857 would go down in history as the first great and direct threat to the British rule in India on an extensive scale. It must be admitted by all unprejudiced critics that the British Government and people bravely faced the situation and proved equal to the occasion. The resourcefulness, organization, and statesmanship of the Government, backed by devotion to duty, courage, and a spirit of fellow-feeling and sacrifice which never yielded to privations and sufferings, however great, enabled the British to survive the fiery ordeal. Tribute also must be paid to British diplomacy which could gather round their banner the solid

phalanx of the Sikhs—a proud nation of heroes who believed in their heart of hearts that the British had defrauded them of their dominions and independence by most ignoble means. And this took place less than ten years back, within the living memory of those who shed their blood for the British cause. Similarly, the Pathan hill-tribes on the North-West frontier, against whom the British had been waging bitter fight for years, were enlisted to support their cause, and these along with their mortal and hereditary enemies, the Sikhs, were fighting side by side to preserve the dominions of their common enemy, the British. A race which could successfully employ the sepoys against the Sikhs, and then the Sikhs against the sepoys, the sepoys against the Pathans and the Gurkhas, and then the Pathans and the Gurkhas against the sepoys, certainly deserves an empire. Similarly, credit is due to the British for having retained the allegiance of the Sindhia, who was so shabbily treated by Ellenborough in 1843-4, and of the Nizam who was compelled to cede Berar by force and fraud in 1853. Whether these examples redound to the credit of the British diplomacy, or merely betray the utter lack of national spirit among the Indians, may be questioned. But in either case, they point to one important factor, often ignored by historians, which contributed largely to the success of the British and the failure of the Indians.

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1. See above, p. 566
2. See p. 551.
3. Kaye—I, III. 124.
4. See pp. 540 ff., 568 ff
5. See pp. 581 ff.
6. See pp. 540, 551, 568, 578-9
7. See p. 565.
8. *AS*. I, 114.
9. John Bruce Norton, *Topics for Indian Statesmen* (1859), p. 56.
10. This is proved by the statements of all the contemporary Indians, whose writings are so far known. See above, pp. 603-4.

BOOK I.

POLITICAL HISTORY

PART III.

INDIA UNDER THE BRITISH CROWN (1858-1905)

CHAPTER XXIII

INTRODUCTION

I. SUCCESSION OF GOVERNORS-GENERAL (1858-1905)

The ability with which Lord Canning steered the ship of State through the troubled waters of the Mutiny has secured him a very high place among the Governors-General of India. His memory has lived down the calumnies and criticism of his contemporaries, and his contributions to the maintenance and consolidation of British rule in India have obtained a juster appreciation than in his own times. Her Majesty Queen Victoria, who assumed the direct administration of India in her own hands after the Mutiny, showed her high appreciation of Canning's work by appointing him the first Viceroy and Governor-General of India under the Crown.

The suppression of the Mutiny and the revolt of 1857-58 and the pacification of the country thereafter were undoubtedly the two great tasks to which Canning devoted himself. But great as they were, they should not be allowed to overshadow his administrative reforms, some of which were of permanent value. Two of these were the direct outcome of the bitter experience of the Mutiny. Syed Ahmad and other Indian leaders pointed out that one of the principal reasons of the outbreak was that the Indians had no place in the Council of the Government of India and had therefore no means, short of rebellion, to bring their grievances to the notice of their rulers. The Indian Councils Act of 1861 partly remedied this by admitting non-officials and Indians to the Legislative Council. The other reform was the reduction in the disproportion between the numbers of Indian and British troops in the army, and its proper reorganization. The introduction of a new procedure by which each member of the Governor-General's Council was placed in charge of a separate department, was also an important innovation, practically introducing the principle of Cabinet System in Indian administration. Canning's financial measures included the imposition of direct taxes which was a bold step to meet the heavy deficit caused by the Mutiny. The establishment of the High Courts and the introduction of the Penal Code were two other great reforms.

Lord Canning, like his predecessor, was broken down in health by his heavy work and, curiously enough, the same domestic calamity, the death of wife, overwhelmed both of them while in India.

Canning handed over charge of his office to Lord Elgin in March, 1862, and left for home a week later. He returned home only to die within three months.

The Earl of Elgin and Kincardine, the first Viceroy of that name, was successively the Governor of Jamaica and Governor-General of Canada, and played a distinguished part in China, during the imbroglio with that country from 1856 to 1862. Immediately after his return home he was appointed Viceroy and Governor-General in India. His tenure of office was cut short by death at the hill station of Dharmsala on November 20, 1863. A short expedition against the Yusufzai tribe is the only important event during his administration.

During the interval between the death of Lord Elgin and the assumption of the office of Viceroy by Sir John Lawrence in January, 1864, Sir Robert Napier and Sir William T. Denison carried on the duties of the office.

Sir John Lawrence, who succeeded Lord Elgin I, was the only one, besides Warren Hastings, to rise from the ranks of the Civil Service of the East India Company to the high office of Governor-General. His appointment naturally recalls the strong opinion expressed against such appointment in connection with Sir Charles Metcalfe. John Lawrence had arrived in India in the year 1830, at the age of nineteen, and served in Calcutta and Delhi before he was appointed to administer the territory between the Beas and the Sutlej conquered from the Sikhs after the First Sikh War (1846). He gave evidence of his tact and ability when troubles naturally brewed among the Sikh chiefs under his charge on the eve of the Second Sikh War As they showed signs of rebellious spirit, Lawrence personally visited the affected areas. At every halting place he placed a sword and a pen before the village headmen, who assembled in scores, and asked them to select by which instrument they wished to be ruled. They are said to have taken the pen without exception. This scene was later immortalized in the famous statue of Lawrence at Lahore.

After the annexation of the Panjāb Lawrence was appointed one of the three administrators who were placed in charge of the Province, but later he was put in sole charge.[1] For the brilliant services he rendered in this capacity he was created a knight. The services he rendered as Chief Commissioner of the Panjāb during the dark days of the Mutiny have been referred to above. It was generally recognized that he saved India for England, and the Viceroy's laconic reference, "Through him Delhi fell," hit the real issue [2]

Lawrence was appointed the first Lieutenant-Governor of the Panjāb in 1859, but he left for home almost immediately. He was appointed a member of the India Council and worked as such till he was appointed Viceroy of India. But the chief work of Lawrence lay behind and not before him. His Viceroyalty was more or less uneventful save for the Bhutan War and the terrible famine in Orissa in 1866. His interest was mainly focussed on the peasantry and its outcome was the 'Punjab Tenancy Act' and the 'Oudh Rent Bill.'[3] He also paved the way for the Bengal Tenancy Act which was actually passed after he left. Lawrence relinquished the office of Viceroy and handed over charge to Lord Mayo on January 12, 1869. As a reward for his eminent services Lawrence was created a Peer.

Lord Mayo, who succeeded Lord Lawrence, had a parliamentary career of twenty-one years in course of which he thrice held the office of the Chief Secretary of Ireland. His success in this office was mainly responsible for his choice as Viceroy when Lord Lawrence vacated his office. One of the first tasks which engaged his attention was to impart proper education and training to the younger members of the aristocracy of India, i.e., sons and relatives of the ruling chiefs and great landed proprietors, in order to fit them for their duties and responsibilities. The result was the Rajkot College in Kathiawar, and the Mayo College at Ajmer in Rajputana. His attempt to conciliate the Amir of Afghanistan took a practical shape in the magnificent *Durbar* held in Ambala in honour of that distinguished guest. This was the beginning of a new frontier policy based upon friendship with neighbouring States.[4] Lord Mayo took keen interest in internal administration and was in the habit of making extensive tours to make himself personally acquainted with the work of the district officer. On February 8, 1872, he visited the great convict settlement in the Andamans. In the evening he returned after an inspection of the proposed site for a sanatorium to his ship at Hopetown. He had reached the jetty and actually stepped forward to descend the stairs to the launch waiting to carry him to his man-of-war, when a convict sprang from behind some stones where he had been crouching, and plunged his knife into the back of the Viceroy. The assassin was immediately pulled off, but the wound he had inflicted proved fatal. In a few minutes Lord Mayo was dead. His body was carried first to Calcutta and then to his home in Ireland.

After the sudden death of Lord Mayo, Sir John Strachey and Lord Napier of Merchistoun successively carried on the duties of the office for three months till Earl Northbrook took over charge

in May, 1872. He had a successful parliamentary career, having held various appointments such as Lord of the Admiralty, Under-Secretary in three Departments, and Secretary to the Admiralty. His period of office in India was marked by the visit of the Prince of Wales (future king Edward VII) and the trial of the Gaekwar of Baroda on a charge of poisoning the Resident. But the most important problem confronting him was the political relation with Afghanistan in view of the rapid advance of Russia in Central Asia. As his views were not accepted by the Home authorities he tendered his resignation in 1875, but continued in his office till he was relieved by Lord Lytton in April, 1876.

Edward Robert Bulwer-Lytton, Earl of Lytton, held various diplomatic posts between 1850 and 1875. He served first as Second and then as First Secretary in English embassies at various European capitals. Early in 1875 he was offered the Governorship of Madras, but declined. When Disraeli nominated him Governor-General, it came as a great surprise upon the English public, for this son of a great novelist was 'hitherto known only as a graceful poet and courtly diplomatist'.[5] But Lytton displayed in his new office unexpected vigour and resolution. His tenure of office was marked by the assumption of the title "Empress of India" by Queen Victoria, and the magnificent *Durbar* held at Delhi on January 1, 1877, to proclaim it to the people and chiefs of India. But soon he was involved in the disastrous Afghan War to which his own aggressive imperialistic policy contributed in no small degree.[6] His internal administration was marked by reactionary measures like the Vernacular Press Act and the Arms Act.[7] His career in India was cut short by the fall of Disraeli's Ministry. The new administration under Gladstone reversed the Afghan policy of Lytton and Disraeli. Lytton thereupon tendered his resignation (April, 1880) and Marquess of Ripon took charge from him in June, 1880.

The Marquess of Ripon had a successful parliamentary career of nearly thirty years during which he held the offices of Secretary for War, Secretary of State for India and Lord President of the Council. On the return of Gladstone to power in 1880, he sent out Ripon as Viceroy of India "for the purpose of reversing Lord Lytton's policy in Afghanistan, and of introducing a more sympathetic system into the administration of India." Unexpected happenings in Afghanistan prevented Ripon from giving full effect to the policy of reversal for which he was sent out to India. But he adopted conciliatory measures for the settlement of Afghan affairs which kept up good relation between the two countries for nearly forty years. Ripon is, however, better known for reversing, more completely,

the policy of Lytton in internal administration. He introduced a more sympathetic tone into the administration of India which endeared him to her people more than any other British ruler who preceded or succeeded him. He repealed the obnoxious Vernacular Press Act of Lytton, laid the foundation of a system of local self-government, and passed various beneficent measures for the improvement of the people. He restored Mysore to its old ruling family after fifty years of British administration,—a unique thing in the history of British India. He proposed to extend the jurisdiction of Indian magistrates over Europeans, accused of criminal offences. The Bill proposed for this purpose, known as the Ilbert Bill after the Law Member of his Council, who introduced it, raised a storm of indignation among the Englishmen in India who publicly insulted Ripon and even made a plot to remove him forcibly from India.[8] On the other hand, when he left India in December, 1884, he received unique ovations from the Indians all along his way to Bombay.

The Marquess of Dufferin who succeeded Lord Ripon in December, 1884, had begun his career in diplomatic service, but later held the offices of Under-Secretary for India and Under-Secretary for War. In 1872, he was appointed Governor-General of Canada. Later he was Ambassador to Russia and Turkey. Lord Dufferin's administration in India saw the Third Burmese War in 1885, ending in the annexation of Upper Burma and the final extinction of Burma as an independent power. Another event, big with important consequences in the future, was the inauguration of the Indian National Congress in the same year.[9] In the north-west, the Panjdeh incident on the border of Afghanistan brought Britain to the verge of war with Russia. Fortunately, an amicable settlement was arranged and the war was averted. But as a result of the incident the total strength of the Indian army was raised by 10,000 British and 20,000 Indian troops, and Quetta was connected by railway. The chances of any future war with Russia were, however, considerably reduced by the delimitation of the northern boundary of Afghanistan by a joint Anglo-Russian Commission.

The Marquess of Lansdowne, who succeeded Dufferin in December, 1888, held offices as Under-Secretary of War and Under-Secretary of India, and was the Governor of Canada from 1883 to 1888. During his rule in India there was the so-called rebellion in the petty State of Manipur on the north-eastern frontier in 1891, which has been discussed in detail in Chapter XXVII. The Indian Councils Act of 1892 was an important event, marking a definite stage forward in the evolution of Indian constitution.[10] In 1893 the frontiers

of Afghanistan and British India were clearly defined by a joint agreement between the two Governments.

Earl of Elgin and Kincardine II, son of the Viceroy of that name, who succeeded Lord Lansdowne as Viceroy in January, 1894, did not distinguish himself in any way. His administration in India during the next five years was troubled by the rising of the frontier tribes in the north-west.[11] This was due to the establishment of military posts into tribal territory which alarmed the hardy and independence-loving clans. The Waziris and Swatis successively rose in arms against the British in June and July, 1897, and the Mohmands shortly followed their example. They were joined by the Afridis who closed the Khyber Pass. The Tirah campaign, which put down these tribes, proved to be a very costly one in both men and money.

George Nathaniel, Baron Curzon of Kedleston, who succeeded Lord Elgin II in January, 1899, is generally regarded as one of the ablest Governors-General of India. He distinguished himself as a student in Oxford and served as Under-Secretary for India in 1891-92, and for Foreign Affairs in 1895-98. He showed great promise even in these subordinate posts and educated himself by extensive tours in Central Asia, Persia, Afghanistan, and the Pamirs on the one side, and Siam, Indo-China and Korea on the other. He was an eloquent speaker and good writer.

As the Viceroy and Governor-General of India, his untiring industry enabled him to undertake large measures of reform in almost every branch of administration. The risings of the frontier tribes in 1897-98 led him to formulate a new policy of conciliation and create a new province called the North-West Frontier Province, though he had to undertake a campaign against the Mahsud Waziris in 1901[12] He sent a military expedition to Tibet which advanced as far as Lhasa.[13]

He established the Imperial Cadet Corps and forced the Nizam to agree to the permanent cession of Berar. He created a new Department to look after commerce and industry, reorganized the Archaeological Department, and took steps to preserve and protect the ancient monuments of India. He passed some beneficent measures like the reduction of Salt-tax and Income-tax. But his reform of the Calcutta Municipality and the Indian Universities was highly unpopular. His crowning act of folly was the partition of Bengal in the teeth of almost universal opposition. The agitation against this measure grew in volume after his departure, and led to the great national movement which ultimately secured freedom for India. On the expiration of the customary term of five years Curzon was re-appointed Viceroy and Governor-General, but he was soon in-

volved in an acrimonious controversy with the Commander-in-Chief, Lord Kitchener, regarding the position of the military member of the Viceroy's Council. As Lord Curzon's views were not upheld by the Home Government he resigned in 1905.[14]

II. GENERAL REVIEW OF THE PERIOD (1858-1905)

A. *Effect of the Mutiny*

The great outbreak of 1857 brought about fundamental changes in the character of Indian administration and the future development of the country. Its immediate effects were the gradual alienation and growing distrust between the rulers and the ruled, and the re-orientation of the policy of the former.

The first fruit of this re-orientation was the extinction of the rule of a private trading company over India, and the assumption of the Government of India by the British Crown to which detailed reference will be made in Chapter XXVIII. But it ushered in other changes in its train.

The changed attitude of the Government was strikingly manifested in the reorganization of the army. The increase in the proportion of the British soldiers, the practical reservation of the artillery for them, and the mixing up of different classes of sepoys divided from each other by social and religious creed, in order to prevent united action by them, were undoubtedly the results of the Mutiny and will be described in detail in Chapter XXVIII, Section XI. It will suffice here to say that the policy of balance and counterpoise was deliberately pursued in the military administration. Various groups in the army were so arranged as to check the growth of any sentiment of national unity among them, and tribal and communal loyalties were deliberately encouraged. The army was, as far as possible, kept in isolation from the people and Indian newspapers were not allowed to reach them. It is hardly necessary to add that all the key positions were kept in the hands of Englishmen and even the oldest and most experienced non-commissioned Indian officer held a status inferior to that of a raw English subaltern. For additional protection the more effective weapons of warfare were not given to the Indian forces; they were reserved for the British troops in India. These British troops were always kept with the Indian regiments in all the vital centres of India to serve as 'internal security troops' for suppression of disorder and to overawe the people. While this internal army, with the predominance of British personnel, served as an army of occupation for the country, the greater portion of the Indian troops were part of the field army organized for service abroad. There was a general feeling of distrust

also against the Indian civil population, and their right of using fire-arms was seriously restricted.

But the new policy was not confined to measures of defences. It had its repercussions on the attitude towards the Indian States. The outbreak of 1857 had emphasized the potential strength of the Indian States, both for good and evil. It was obvious to everyone that the Indian States might have easily turned the scale against the British during the great outbreak, and it was the British policy of annexation that supplied a strong motive power to the Mutiny and civil revolt that followed it. So the British rulers adopted a new policy towards them. On the one hand, they took all possible steps to render them militarily weak and harmless On the other hand, they tried to conciliate the ruling families and guaranteed their future stability by recognizing adoption and repudiation of annexation in future. An offshoot of this new policy was the formal declaration of British suzerainty over the whole of India The full significance of this measure and the change from British paramountcy to Imperialism will be described in Chapter XXX As Lord Lytton said, the Royal Titles Act of 1876, by which Queen Victoria was proclaimed Empress of India, marked the beginning of "a new policy by virtue of which the Crown of England should henceforth be identified with the hopes, the aspirations, the sympathies and interests of a powerful native aristocracy",—by implication, not of the people at large. A thin wedge was driven between the welfare of the masses and the vested interests of the ruling families, landlords and other aristocratic classes of India This gave a fiillip to the autocracy and tyranny of the Indian rulers and their definite alignment with the British rulers as against their own people.

This was but one phase of the policy of Divide and Rule which has been followed by Imperialism in all ages and countries Another phase of the same policy was the deliberate encouragement of the split between the Hindus and Muslims. It is true that the vital differences between the two communities were always there and not the creations of the British, but the latter fully exploited the situation to their advantage.[15]

The relations between the Indians and the Britishers underwent a visible change [16] The horrible atrocities committed by both sides, to which reference has been made above,[17] created a river of blood between the two communities. Each had a highly exaggerated notion of the crime and delinquencies of the other, and nursed bitter memories of a one-sided character. This mainly accounts for the growing isolation and arrogance of the British community in India, mentioned later in this section. So far as the Indians were concern-

ed, the terrible ruthlessness with which the outbreak of 1857 was suppressed left them so hopelessly weak and incapable of taking vengeance, that they could only brood upon their misery and nurse sullen resentment in their heart. As an indirect consequence of this, the tide of westernization brought about by English education ebbed to a considerable degree. The glamour of western culture and civilization was gradually dimmed and a new type of orthodoxy took its place. This was facilitated by the reluctance of the British Government to pass any liberal social legislation, or to interfere in the religious customs in any way, as many believed that such action on their part was one of the important causes of the outbreak of 1857. Thus the pledge of neutrality on the part of Government in regard to social and religious questions, given in the Queen's Proclamation of 1858, probably helped the reactionary element and partly explains the revival of orthodox ideas during the period under review.

While reactionary Hindu orthodoxy once more raised its head, the British officials indirectly helped it by a positive dislike for the progress of the Indians on western lines. It was a fundamental departure from the policy of their predecessors. In order to achieve this purpose they tried to curtail the spread of English education, which they rightly regarded as the fountain-head from which flowed all liberal and progressive ideas. This would be clear from the following statement of Sir William Wedderburn, an eminent member of the I.C.S.: "Unfortunately, following the Mutiny, official opinion appears to have suffered a reaction on the question of popular education, and he (Hume) expressed his concern that many 'entirely disapprove of any efforts to cultivate the native mind; many condemn, as unconditionally, a merely secular education".[18] The reactionary spirit showed itself shortly afterwards in a Government circular of 28th January, 1859, in which objection was taken to the employment of native agency for the promotion of education, and the Collector was warned not to attempt to persuade the people to send their children to the schools or to contribute to their maintenance. Mr. Hume, another senior member of the I.C.S., protested against it in a letter dated 30th March, 1859.[19]

Other changes in the official attitude will be described in detail in Chapter XLVIII. Generally speaking, the officials became less sympathetic and more aloof, and there was a new spirit in administration marked by a keener sense of racial discrimination and a nervous excitability ready to take quick and drastic action on the least indication of disaffection and disloyalty. As the transfer of authority to the Crown removed, to a large extent, all checks and restraints on the British officials in India in their routine work, there

was a growth of hide-bound bureaucracy which practically usurped the functions of the Government of India. This bureaucracy was, generally speaking, highly efficient, and the machinery of administration devised by them must be regarded as one of the greatest achievements of British rule in India. It may also be conceded that the Indian bureaucracy meant to do good to the people as they understood it. But their efforts were doomed to failure because of their supreme hatred for the educated Indians, rank ignorance of the real wants and needs of the people, and the fixed policy of subordinating the interests of India to those of England.

The extinction of the East India Company's rule brought in grave economic peril to India. For henceforth India became the field of economic exploitation, not of a single trading concern, but of the entire British people. The trading and other interests outside the Company had hitherto exercised a sort of scrutiny over its transactions, thus providing a safeguard, howsoever weak, for Indian interests The British people, who were now masters of India, not only gave up this critical attitude, but used their political power to further their own interests, both political and economical The impeachment of a Governor-General for his misdeeds, or a periodical review of the Indian affairs every twenty years—all these became things of the past, and a spirit of indifference and complacency about the nature of their rule in India, so long as their own interests remained unaffected, was the prevailing mood of the British people at large. But the Britishers were not at all indifferent to the economic potentialities of India. India now became a dumping ground of British manufacture, and an almost inexhaustible field for investment of capital, for it offered unlimited scope for commercial and industrial enterprises like railways, steamer, tea and coffee plantation, etc. The number of Englishmen seeking their fortunes in India, both private individuals and members of the civil and military services, also rapidly increased. Although their services as well as their enterprises and examples went a great way towards modernizing India on the western model, the Indian masses were deprived of a substantial portion of its benefit, and had to purchase the remainder at an almost prohibited cost which they were unable to bear.

The great outbreak of 1857 had also other permanent results The success of the tiny British forces in quelling such a wide-spread revolt generated a sense of security and stability of the British dominion in India, not only in the minds of the British but also in those of the Indians The futility of armed resistance against British rule was demonstrated in a convincing manner, and the assumption of Indian Government directly by the Crown, with all the resources

at its command, seemed to put such an attempt beyond the range of practical politics. At the same time the solemn promises in Her Gracious Majesty's proclamation of 1858 held out hopes of removing many of the grievances and causes of discontent which combined to produce the great conflagration. The idea of offering armed resistance against the might of the British gradually came to be generally discounted and Pax Britannica prevailed for nearly half a century. This was not seriously disturbed in spite of occasional uprisings. The Wahabis, from their remote outpost of inaccessible hills in the north-west frontier, waged a relentless struggle against the British,[20] and fears and rumours of impending revolution haunted the British mind almost throughout the period.[21] The spirit of resistance flared up among Indigo-cultivators of Bengal, and minor rebellions broke out here and there [22] But in spite of all these it must be admitted that after the sixties the disturbances in India became exception rather than the rule, and there cannot be any doubt that the unsuccessful attempt in 1857-8 to oust the British from India put them more firmly on the saddle. The last embers of the chaos and confusion bequeathed by the political disintegration of the eighteenth century were finally extinguished. A new era began in Indian history.

An immediate effect of the Mutiny was the growing hatred of the Englishmen towards the Muslims. As Lyall has observed: "After the Mutiny the British turned on the Muhammadans as their real enemies.... They forfeited for the time the confidence of their foreign rulers". But it was not long before the growing nationalism of the Hindus alienated the British from them and the Muslims were taken back into confidence and favour.

A word may be said about the long-term effect of the Mutiny. It has been said that Julius Caesar, dead, was more powerful than when he was alive. The same thing may be said about the Mutiny of 1857. Whatever might have been its original character, it soon became a symbol of challenge to the mighty British power in India. It remained a shining example before nascent nationalism in India in its struggle for freedom from the British yoke, and was invested with the full glory of the first national war of independence against the British. Nana Sahib, the Rani of Jhansi, Bahadur Shah and Kunwar Singh became national heroes and champions of national freedom, and stories of their heroic struggle animated the fighters for freedom more than half a century later. Popular songs and ballads kept their memory alive and made it a powerful force to reckon with.

B. *Unredeemed Pledges*

To many Indians one redeeming feature of the Mutiny was that it brought about the end of the Company's rule and the taking over of the administration by the Queen herself. Abundant goodwill was created by the gracious proclamation of Queen Victoria (1 November, 1858) enunciating the liberal principles by which India was to be ruled in future. If these principles had been strictly adhered to, a new chapter might have opened in Indian history. But these principles were followed more in breach than in observance.

The Queen declared: "We desire no extension of our present territorial possessions". But this was violated by the annexation of Upper Burma and Berar, and other territorial acquisitions to which reference will be made in Chapters XXIV, XXV and XXVII. The following comment of Herbert Spencer, the great English philosopher of the 19th Century, is as true of the first half as of the second half of the 19th Century.

"As remarked by an Indian Officer, Deputy Surgeon-General Paske, all our conquests and annexations are made from base and selfish motives alone Major Raverty, of the Bombay army, condemns 'the rage shown of late years for seizing what does not and did never belong to us', because the people happen to be weak and poorly armed, while we are strong and provided with the most excellent weapons. Resistance to an intruding sportsman or a bullying explorer, or disobedience to a resident, or even refusal to furnish transport coolies, serves as sufficient excuse for attack, conquest and annexation."[3a]

The scope of annexations was limited after 1858, for very little remained to be annexed after Dalhousie had completed his task with a thoroughness which was the envy and despair of his successors. But the spirit remained and the best use was made of the few opportunities that presented themselves.

The Queen guaranteed *status quo* to the Native Princes of India. But they were considerably reduced in rank and status, legally and theoretically, by the Royal Titles Act of 1876, and in practice by the constant unauthorized interference in their internal affairs by the Resident and the Government of India.

Another declaration of the Queen that raised high hopes in Indian minds was her pledge of equal treatment to all her subjects, Indian and European. "We hold ourselves", said she, "bound to the natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty, which bind us to all our other subjects". How actual facts belied this promise, in every respect, from beginning to end, will be described in detail in Chapters XLVII and XLVIII. Apart from the general arrogant attitude of Englishmen towards the Indians which emboldened every Tom, Dick and Harry to insult the Indians of

every rank, and enabled them to do so with impunity, the Ilbert Bill agitation, the conduct of the indigo- and tea-planters in India, and the treatment meted to the Indians in the Crown Colonies and other possessions of the British Empire, highlight the manner in which the Queen's declaration was given effect to by her Government at home and Viceroy in India. The sham of equal treatment was further exposed by the economic strangulation of India for the sake of enriching England.

Then there was the specific promise of admitting all Indians "freely and impartially" to all offices. This was merely the repetition of a clause in the Charter Act of 1833. Never, perhaps, was an Act of Parliament or a royal pledge so openly violated as this. The subject has been fully dealt with in Section IV of Chapter XXVIII

Whether these promises were intended to be kept, or deliberately made only to pacify the Indians by false hopes, it is difficult to say. But we have it on the authority of no less a person than a Viceroy that every Englishman knew that "these claims and expectations can never be fulfilled", and so the Government, both of England and India, took "every means in their power of breaking to the heart the words of promise which they have uttered to the ear." These are the words of Lord Lytton who frankly admitted that they had "cheated" the Indians.[22b]

The period of administration by the Crown was thus a period of broken pledges. The disillusionment and frustration caused by breaches of pledges was the most potent factor in changing the goodwill of the Indians to a spirit of hatred and animosity against the British rule, and gave a fillip to the nascent spirit of nationalism, the growth of which was the characteristic feature of the period.

C. *The Era of Nationalism*

The failure of the outbreak of 1857 ushered in a new phase in Indian politics, for although the spirit of violence was not altogether dead, it was driven underground, and the intellectual movement of a non-violent nature now dominated Indian mind. The rapid spread of English education increased the number of that class of Indians who were inspired by the political principles and technique of political agitation prevalent in England. The political ideas and organizations, of which the beginnings may be traced before 1857, now developed apace and one can mark clearly the birth of a new political consciousness and of a new sense of nationalism in India.

This was mainly due to the grave and steadily growing discontent of the intelligentsia against the British rule. The economic

ruin of the country, caused by the selfish policy of England, was emphasized by chronic poverty of the people and repeated occurrence of famines on a wide-spread scale. Men like Dadabhai Naoroji in India and William Digby in England exposed, by a brilliant array of facts and figures, how the British policy was really responsible for this state of things. The educated Indians were not in a mood to judge their views in a detached critical spirit, but were deeply moved by the picture drawn by them, which they believed to be a true representation of facts. The Indian opinion was rudely shocked when the import duty on cotton goods was removed for satisfying Manchester, though it imposed a heavy strain on Indian tax-payers and seriously hampered the infant cotton industry of Bombay. But as the saying goes, there is no cloud without silver lining. The selfish economic policy of Britain brought into the political field a new class of Indians slowly emerging into limelight. In spite of many handicaps Indian industry of the modern type was slowly forging ahead during the latter half of the nineteenth century. The cotton textile industry, financed and managed mainly by the Indians, showed a progress which must be held as remarkable when it is remembered that the State extended its hand not to help, but to retard its growth. "In 1853 the first successful cotton mill was started in Bombay. By 1880 there were 156 mills employing 44,000 workers. By 1900 there were 193 mills employing 161,000 workers."[23] The new capitalist class joined the English-educated middle class—lawyers, teachers, doctors etc.—in their national demands as they felt that even their narrow class interests could not be properly served without merging them into the broader political interests of the country.

The growing poverty of the people cast a gloom over the whole country. "While in the first half of the nineteenth century there were seven famines with an estimated total of 1½ million deaths, in the second half of the nineteenth century there were twenty-four famines with an estimated total of 28½ million deaths, and eighteen of these twenty-four famines fall into the last quarter of the nineteenth century".[24]

A no less disconcerting feature (indirectly helping the growth of Indian nationalism) was the racial arrogance of the English which reached ts climax during the period under review. The outbreak of 1857, and particularly the stories of horrible massacres on both sides, strained the relations of, and produced hatred and ill-feeling between, the Indians and Englishmen. Time might have healed up the sores and restored the cordiality and goodwill between the two which bitter memories of Mutiny had disturbed. But unfortunately other forces

were at work and the situation, far from improving, was rendered still further worse. The opening of the Suez Canal and facilities of communication between England and India produced a great change in the attitude of Englishmen towards Indians. As the Englishmen now lived with their families in India, and could frequently visit England, they ceased to look upon India as their adopted home, and gradually developed an exclusive attitude. The free intercourse between Indians and Englishmen was considerably lessened and almost a caste-barrier was raised between the two.

What was worse still was the rudeness cum violence manifested by the Englishmen in India. They not only assumed an attitude of a patronizing and superior character, but also used to look upon the Indians as niggers to whom rules of decent conduct need not apply. Rude behaviour towards Indians, sometimes accompanied by brutal assault, striking servants and common men on the slightest provocation, turning even respectable Indians out of Railway compartments, became the order of the day. While the Englishmen got away scot-free or with very light punishment even for murder and serious crimes, the Indians were most severely punished for the slightest offences or discourtesy to them. The Indians felt deeply wounded by the humiliation they were liable to suffer at any moment in the hands of the Englishmen, and there was an increasing bitterness of feelings between the two. It may be said without much exaggeration that the racial arrogance of the Englishmen made the English rule more unpopular and hated in India than probably any other single factor.

The political causes of discontent were also deep-seated. For nearly half a century the Indians had been agitating for representative government and for admission into higher services, but all in vain. The very inadequate measures adopted by the Government to remove these grievances will be described in Chapter XXVIII, Sections II and IV.

These and other causes of discontent, noted in Chapter XIII, which were only partially removed, in some cases, during the period under review, gave rise to a vigorous political agitation. It was based on a sincere faith in the democratic traditions and sense of justice of the English people. The Indian leaders fondly believed that the Englishmen at home need only be convinced of the justice and genuineness of Indian aspiration for advancement of political status, in order to freely grant all their demands. The disillusionment was not long in coming. It is not generally recognized how much the administration of British India was influenced by the tenor of the policy of the Home Government at the time. So long as the

Liberal party was ruling England we find some liberal measures adopted also in India. The educational and social reforms of Bentinck may be cited as examples. But the Conservative Government of Lord Beaconsfield introduced a new policy which is typified by Lord Lytton's administration in India, and the harsh and oppressive measures adopted by him, such as the Vernacular Press Act, the Arms Act, and by the Home authorities such as the abolition of duty on imported cotton goods and the lowering of age for Civil Service candidates. These stimulated the political activities of Indians which found new channels of expression, big with future consequences.[27] History records how the tyranny of foreign rulers often proves to be a blessing in disguise by promoting the cause of freedom. The administration of Lord Lytton from 1876 to 1880 and that of Lord Curzon, a quarter of a century later, may be cited as apt illustrations from Indian history.

The unpopular acts of Lord Lytton set, for the first time in British Indian history, the stage for political agitation on an all-India basis. The agitation retained its old constitutional character, although Lord Lytton's administration gave a rude shock to the robust faith of the Indian leaders in the sense of justice of the English people. But the scope of political agitation and its tone underwent a great change. Insistent demands for the abolition of unjust and repressive measures were urged in forceful language, and vigorous protests were made against the autocratic attitude of the Viceroy The tone of the Indian press was also in keeping with the newly awakened political consciousness of the people. They criticized in strong language the various administrative measures of the Government which adversely affected the interests of India, and made trenchant remarks even on such subjects as the Afghan War, military expedition to Egypt, and the favouritism shown to Manchester at the cost of the poor Indian rate-payers The Press and the Platform took the position of a permanent, though ineffective, Opposition to Indian Government The agitation was also carried on in England where a small number of liberal Englishmen sympathized with the views and political aspirations of India. Indian question was also raised in the House of Commons by Fawcett and Gladstone.

The Indian Association of Calcutta had already ushered in a new era of political agitation on all-India basis, which paved the way for a clear recognition of India as one political unit. The practical realization of this ideal was facilitated by the agitation of the Anglo-Indians over the Ilbert Bill and the imprisonment of Surendra Nath Banerji. The latter strengthened the growing bonds of fellow-

ship and good feeling between the different Indian provinces, while the former taught the Indians the great value of political agitation carried on the basis of a united front. The need was thus felt of a closely knit political organization for the whole of India. This led to the foundation, in 1883, of National Conference in Calcutta, the precursor of Indian National Congress founded in 1885, which will be described in details in Chapters LII and LIII.

One of the novel features of the new era of political agitation was the enthusiasm it evoked among the public. Half a century before, Indian leaders constantly complained that the public took little interest in political questions. While addressing an important, but thinly attended, political meeting, Dwarakanath Tagore had observed: "Let Hindu College turn out more educated men in future as it has done in the past, and in a few years these meetings will be attended by ten times the number". His prophecy was more than fulfilled. Even the biggest halls proved too small for public meetings in the seventies, and they were held in open parks and squares This was the beginning of what was usually styled monster meetings in later days. The technique of political agitation was also now fully developed. Political mass meetings all over the country, political associations at centres with branches in *moffussil* areas, memorials and petitions both to Indian and Home Governments, and organizations or individual efforts to educate public opinion in England and interest it in Indian affairs—all these were fully developed and remained the standard form of political activity in India during the period under review.

The political ideals and organizations ending in the National Conference and Indian National Congress were sustained by the growing sense of nationalism and patriotism among the Indians. The basis of this nationalism has been discussed in Chapter LI. It found noble expression in vernacular literature. A number of distinguished writers in Bengal, who have permanently enriched her literature, were inspired by the highest patriotic feelings and noblest national sentiments, and preached them through the medium of novels, poems, essays, and songs. These are still prized as the most precious intellectual legacy of the last century and have proved for more than three quarters of a century the most valuable aid in the struggle for freedom that Bengal waged against the British. The same thing is more or less true of other parts of India. This has been discussed in Chapter XLIII. The Freedom Movement in India is really based on the nationalism which was born during the period under review. So far as a historian's vision goes, this national and patriotic spirit, on an all-India basis, is probably unique in the annals of this coun-

try, as no clear trace of this is available in earlier periods. The growth of this nationalism has been described in Chapters LI and LIV, and in a sense it guided and modified the character of the struggle for freedom till it was finally won. Though born in peaceful environments, and mainly due to impact of Western ideas, it has proved to be the most dominant factor in India's Freedom Movement, and with each advancing year cast its lengthening shadow over the fortunes of the British rule in India. The birth and growth of this nationalism constitute the chief glory of India during the period under review. Thus the year 1857 may be looked upon as the great divide between the two great landmarks in Indian history—that of British paramountcy in the first half, and that of Indian nationalism in the second half of the nineteenth century.

One discordant note has to be struck in this glowing account of nationalism. It is the growing cleavage between the Hindus and Muslims who formed the two major communities in this country. In spite of considerable amity and fellow-feeling, historic, social and religious causes have always operated as a barrier between the two and prevented their real fusion into a common nationality.[26] Political necessities and vicissitudes occasionally brought them together, when they presented a common united front in various spheres of life. Nevertheless the line of cleavage remained. It slowly widened during the period under review, for reasons described in Chapter XLVI. It formed at first a tiny speck of cloud in the otherwise brilliant national firmament of India Towards the close of the period under review the cloud had grown no bigger than a man's hand. But in less than half a century, it overcast the sky, and ere long there came out of it thunder, lightning and storm which drenched the country in blood, and rent in twain the great fabric of free India, which was the dream of Indian patriots and for which they lived and died. That tragedy was still in the womb of the future, but its roots lay deep in the soil even during the period under review, as will be discussed in Chapter XLVI.

1 See p 289
2 *Sketches*, I 94-5
3. For the different forms of Land-settlement, cf Chapter XXVIII, section VII.
4 For Afghan policy cf Ch XXV
5 *The Political History of England*, Vol. VIII, p 302.
6 Cf. Ch XXV
7 Cf Ch LII.
8 Ibid.
9 Chapter LIII
10 Cf Ch XXVIII, section II.
11 Cf. Ch XXXI.
12 Ibid.
13 Cf. Ch XXXIII

14. The real point of difference has been discussed in detail in Chapters XXVIII, section XI.
15. Cf. Ch. XLVI.
16. This has been discussed in detail in Chapters XLVII, XLVIII and XLIX.
17. Cf. Ch. XIX.
18. Hume, 17-8.
19. Ibid. For Sir George Campbell's attempts to curtail English education in Bengal, cf. Buckland, I. 532; Pal, I. 230-32.
20. Cf. Ch. XXIX.
21. Cf. Ch. LIII.
22. Cf. Ch. XXIX.
22a. *Principles of Sociology*, D. A. & Co., 1897, p. 584.
22b. The whole passage has been quoted, with references, in Ch. XXVIII, section IV.
23. *RPD*, 255.
24. Ibid.
25. This is fully discussed in Ch. LII.
26. Cf. Vol. VI, pp. 615-636.

CHAPTER XXIV

POLITICAL HISTORY AND EXPANSION OF DOMINIONS (1858-1905)

The Act for the Better Government of India, passed on August 2, 1858, transferred the Government of India from the hands of the East India Company to the Crown, and this was announced by Lord Canning at a *darbar* at Allahabad A proclamation issued in the name of the Queen on November 1, 1858, was read at the *darbar* to convey to the chiefs and peoples of India the main features of the change in the system of administration and the new spirit in which the Government of India was to be carried on in future.' It was expressly said in this proclamation that the Queen desired 'no extensions of the present territorial domains in India ' There can be hardly any doubt that the "lessons of the Mutiny" were at the root of this change of policy. For, the great outbreak had demonstrated the folly of the annexation in two ways. In the first place, there was a strong body of opinion which regarded the annexations of Dalhousie as one of the main causes of the outbreak of 1857. Secondly, it was generally agreed that the loyalty of the rulers of Native States and the services rendered by them, were of inestimable value in suppressing the revolt Thus there was a general appreciation of the views of those servants of the Company who regarded the Native States as a bulwark of British rule in India

This change of policy left little scope for further expansion of British dominions in India Nevertheless, there was one notable exception in the conquest of Upper Burma in 1885 The course of events leading to it will be fully dealt with in Chapter XXVI. It will suffice to state here that, as in 1852, there was a persistent cry for annexation on the pretext of ill treatment to British traders. To this was added a more substantial ground, namely, alarm at the rapid extension of the French influence and dominion in that region. At least on two occasions the Government of India were anxious to pick up a quarrel with Burma on one ground or another, but the Secretary of State firmly put his foot down. This was during the administration of the Liberal Party under Gladstone when the 'Forward Policy' had received a severe blow in the Second Afghan War. It may not be, therefore, a mere coincidence that it was during the short period of Conservative rule under Salisbury, during the interval between the Second and the Third Gladstone Cabinet, that war

was declared against Burma, on November 13, 1885. Fifteen days later king Thibaw surrendered, and Lord Dufferin annexed Upper Burma to the British dominions on January 1, 1886. There was no legitimate ground for the war, and it was an act of aggression, pure and simple. Its only justification lay in the moral ground that Burma was saved from the tyranny of a cruel despot. But how far it can be regarded as a justification for seizing other's territories is a moot question, and has been discussed above.[2]

Among minor conquests may be mentioned those acquired from the hill-State of Bhutan. Although British relation with Bhutan goes back to the days of Warren Hastings, political connection between the two arose only after the annexation of Assam in 1826. It was then found that Bhutan was in unlawful occupation of the Duars in the Darrang District which formed a part of Assam. The matter was settled amicably on Bhutan's agreeing to pay a small tribute. But these often fell in arrears and the Bhutanese committed depredations in British territory. Negotiations having borne no fruit, the Assam Duars were annexed in 1841, and the Government of India agreed to pay a sum of one thousand rupees to Bhutan per annum for maintaining peace.

As the Bhutanese raids in British territory continued unchecked, Sir Ashley Eden was sent as an envoy in 1863 to demand reparation. But the envoy was not only insulted but forced under duress to sign a treaty giving over the disputed territory to Bhutan. Eden, however, managed to escape, and the Viceroy, Lord Lawrence, disavowed the treaty. As the Bhutanese refused to restore the British captives, a British force invaded Bhutan in 1865. Although the Bhutanese surprised an English garrison and caused some loss, they were soon compelled to sue for peace. By a treaty concluded in November, 1865, Bhutan ceded all the Duars of Bengal and Assam, with other territories, and released all kidnapped British subjects. It was also agreed that disputes between Bhutan on the one side and Sikkim or Cooch Behar on the other should be referred to the British Government. The British Government undertook to pay an annual allowance so long as the Bhutanese refrained from unlawful action.

There were troubles in the petty State of Manipur, which came into existence as a result of the First Burmese War, as mentioned above.[3] The British possessed no legal right of suzerainty over this small hilly State, and kept a Political Agent there. Troubles arose in this State in 1890 when the reigning king was forced to flee from the kingdom as the result of a palace revolution, and his younger brother was placed on the throne. The Government of India, after some time, recognized the new ruler, but insisted that his

brother Tikendrajit, the Commander-in-Chief, should be banished from the kingdom. The Chief Commissioner of Assam laid a trap for seizing Tikendrajit in the public *darbar* where the order of the Government of India was to be announced. Tikendrajit, however, scented danger and did not attend the *darbar*. The Chief Commissioner demanded of the new Raja that Tikendrajit should be immediately deported outside the kingdom. The king asked for some time as Tikendrajit was ill. The Resident personally visited Tikendrajit and satisfied himself that he was really very ill. Nevertheless, the British force suddenly attacked the house of Tikendrajit in the early hours of the next morning, but was repulsed after a whole day's fight. The Chief Commissioner, finding his position very risky, asked for cease-fire which was immediately granted by Tikendrajit, though he was then in a position of vantage. The Chief Commissioner then went with four companions to the palace to arrive at an amicable settlement. The negotiations, however, failed and the five Englishmen left the palace, accompanied by a brother of Tikendrajit When the party had reached near the gateway, a crowd of Manipuris, infuriated beyond measure by the acts of violence perpetrated by the British forces during their attack of the palace, suddenly rushed towards the Englishmen and assaulted them. One of them was killed by a spear and the other four were rescued and kept inside the *durbar* hall, closely guarded. Tikendrajit gave positive orders that the Englishmen should not be harmed in any way, but taking advantage of his absence, Tongol General, an old man who wielded great power in the palace, had all the Englishmen beheaded by the public executioner. In the meantime the British at the Residency, after waiting in vain for the return of the Chief Commissioner and his party, left Manipur without any molestation. To avenge the outrage an English force captured Manipur and arrested the king, Tikendrajit and many others. They were tried by a Special Court and the king, his brother Tikendrajit and Tongol General were ordered to be hanged. The current account of the rebellion of Manipur, generally accepted on the authority of the British historians, is inaccurate and misleading, and there are good grounds to believe that an absolutely unjust and unprovoked attack by the British forced Tikendrajit to take measures for legitimate self-defence, and that he was not guilty of the crime for which he was hanged. The whole episode has been discussed in detail in Chapter XXVII.

There were troubles in the north-western frontier. After the First Afghān War, with its disasters still fresh in memory, the first generation of British statesmen, both at home and in India, adopted a policy of strict non-interference. They severely let alone Dost

Muhammad, even though he helped the Sikhs in the Second Sikh War. But gradually, mainly at the instance of Herbert Edwardes, the Commissioner of Peshawar, a successful attempt was made to win over his friendship. Events soon showed its value; for throughout the outbreak of 1857-58 Dost Muhammad refrained from taking advantage of the perilous situation of the English to wreak vengeance against them for the wrongs he had suffered in their hands. Then, for a long time, the Government of India were well content with the friendship and refused to commit themselves any further with the internal affairs or external policy of Afghānistān. This policy of 'masterly inactivity' was carried faithfully by Lord Lawrence when, though requested for help by various claimants for the throne of Kābul after the death of Dost Muhammad, he refused aid to one and all, and recognized as Amir anyone who for the time being succeeded in seizing the throne of Kābul.

This policy of neutrality was looked upon with disfavour by a small section of Englishmen who were alarmed at the rapid advance of Russia and advocated the old "Forward Policy" which led to the First Afghān War. The School came to the forefront, when Disraeli came into power in 1874. He inherited the anti-Russian policy of Palmerston, and found an able lieutenant in Lord Lytton, whom he appointed Viceroy to succeed Lord Northbrook when the latter chose to resign his office rather than carry out a policy towards the Amir which he did not approve. Lytton, who dreamt of planting British flag in Central Asia, pursued a deliberately aggressive policy like Auckland before him. He forced the hands of the British Government, and plunged headlong into a war with Afghānistān (November, 1878). Like Auckland, again, he had the supreme satisfaction of seeing his efforts crowned with success, which was ere long followed by a tragedy that differed in degree, but not in kind, from the earlier disaster. The British envoy at Kābul, Cavagnari, and all his attendants were murdered by an infuriated soldiery; once again the British army restored the lost honour and prestige, and then left the country to itself. The net outcome of the war was the possession of two small strips of territory, Pishin and Sibi, on the frontier, in return for an annual allowance to the Amir. A detailed account of this expedition has been given in Chapter XXV.

The subsequent relations between India and Afghānistān have, on the whole, been friendly during the period under review, and have little bearing upon the internal administration of India. They really form a part of the foreign relations which will be dealt with in Chapter XXXIII.

But there is one aspect of the Anglo-Afghān relations which claims a brief notice here. Since the Second Afghān War the Government of India took steps to bring under more active control the wild tribes inhabiting the borderland between the British dominions and Afghānistān. By religion and nationality they belonged to Afghānistān and the Amir exercised a vague kind of suzerainty over them. Really speaking, these freedom-loving peoples owed allegiance to none, except when compelled by force. The Government of India now turned their attention to this no-man's land, and tried to force the tribal peoples to submit to the British authority. It was the revival of the Forward Policy in another form. Unable to establish political authority in Afghānistān, the British adopted the next best course of creating a buffer-state in the shape of a wide belt of hilly tribes under their direct political authority.

The geography of this area was but vaguely known, and as the Amir claimed a sort of suzerainty over the tribes, the military activity of the British on their frontier was a source of alarm and anxiety to him. As a matter of fact, during the nineties of the last century the relations between the Amir and the British were often so much strained, that on several occasions war seemed to be almost within sight. In order to remove all sources of friction between the two countries, the boundary between British India and Afghānistān was clearly demarcated after a very careful local survey on the basis of an agreement reached by a mission led by Sir Mortimer Durand to Kābul in 1893. Though the Amir positively disliked the very idea of delimitation of the boundary, he accepted the 'Durand line', as the boundary ultimately fixed on the basis of the Durand agreement came to be called. It was agreed by both the Amir and the Government of India that neither of them would interfere in any way across the line.

But while the delimitation of the boundary irritated the Amir, it positively alarmed the hill tribes on the British side of the line. They had hitherto enjoyed autonomy, but now that they were definitely included within the British territory they naturally apprehended a far more rigid control by the new suzerain power than the Amir was ever in a position to exercise over them. This fear of the loss of independence, which they cherished above all things, seems to be the real reason for the widespread and violent risings of the wild tribes like the Afridis, the Waziris, the Mahsud, the Mohmands and others, which continued throughout the last decade of the period under review and to which a detailed reference will be made in Chapter XXXI. There are good grounds to believe that

the tribal risings were also instigated by the Amir himself or his followers.

The first serious trouble took place at Chitral. In the opinion of the Government of India it occupied a strategic position of military importance, and they wanted to maintain effective control over its northern passes. An opportunity occurred in 1892 when the death of its ruler Aman-ul-mulk was followed by a struggle for succession. Sher Afzal, living at Kābul as a pensioner of the Amir, succeeded in capturing the throne, but was driven away by Nizam-ul-mulk. He was not only recognized by the Government of India, but at his request a British force was sent to his aid under Dr. Robertson. Sher Afzal, who had taken refuge in the camp of Afghān Commander-in-Chief, reappeared on the scene after Nizam-ul-mulk was murdered in January, 1895. There was a general rising of the tribes mainly at the instigation of Umra Khan, chief of Jandol and a partisan of Sher Afzal, who had proclaimed a *Jihad* (holy war) in Dir, Swat and Bajaur. Robertson and his small garrison of British and Sikh troops were besieged in the fort for a month and a half till relief came (April, 1895). The fate of Chitral was hotly debated and became a question of party politics in England. Ultimately it was decided to keep British control over it.

Then came the conflagration of 1897 which, though consisting of local risings in detached regions, was usually regarded as a general revolt or common fight for independence against the British. It was met by sending to the disturbed areas numerous military (generally referred to as punitive) expeditions which were neither connected with each other nor controlled by a central base of operations within easy reach. Lord Curzon inaugurated an altogether new policy which has been briefly referred to above and will be described in detail in Chapter XXXI.

1. For the texts of the Act and Queen's Proclamation of 1858, cf. Keith, I. 370-86.
2. See pp. 112-3.
3. See p. 107.

CHAPTER XXV

THE SECOND AFGHAN WAR[1]

Dost Muhammad, who was restored to the throne of Kabul after the disastrous end of the First Afghan War, could not be expected to entertain any goodwill towards the British. But though he was in a mood of sullen resentment, he did not adopt any hostile attitude till he found his opportunity during the Second Sikh War. He sent a military contingent of 4,000 troops to aid the Sikhs against the British, but it shared the discomfiture of the latter in the battle of Gujarat (1848) and returned home, perhaps in a more chastened mood

Ere long incidents occurred which demonstrated the need of Dost Muhammad for British friendship. As noted above, the Persians were forced to raise the siege of Herat in 1838 under the threat of the British. But the Persians seized the city in 1852 and once more had to withdraw by the interference of the British Government. Two years later the Persians again attacked Herat. It was well known that the Persians were backed by the Russians. Their repeated attempts to take possession of Herat were, therefore, a matter of no less concern to Dost Muhammad than to the British. So Lord Dalhousie, through the instrumentality of Herbert Edwardes, Commissioner of Peshawar, seized this opportunity of winning over the goodwill and friendship of the erstwhile enemy, Dost Muhammad. The proposal was coldly received by Lawrence, the Chief Commissioner of the Panjāb, but under the instruction of Dalhousie, Edwardes tactfully induced Dost Muhammad to make overtures and a treaty was concluded at Jamrud in March, 1855, between the Government of India and the Amir of Afghanistan '[a] It was a general treaty of mutual alliance The Government of India "undertook to respect the independence of the territories, then in the Amir's possession", and "never to interfere therein". The Amir, on his part, gave a pledge that he would be "the friend of the friends and the enemy of the enemies of the British " One point in the negotiation of this treaty demands our special notice in view of its importance in the subsequent course of history. The Amir desired very much to secure a guarantee that the Government of India would never send an envoy to Kabul, but had to be satisfied merely with the assurance that they had at present no intention or wish to do so.

The value of the treaty was soon put to the test. In 1856 Persia seized Herat and immediately the Government of India and the

Amir of Kabul jointly declared war against her, and concluded a treaty in January, 1857. The Government of India not only sent a force from Bombay, but also helped the Amir with eight thousand stand of arms and a subsidy of £10,000 a month for the duration of the war. The Persians soon came to terms and the hostilities were concluded by a treaty signed at Paris on 4 March, 1857. By the new treaty with the Amir, he agreed to maintain his own *vakil* at Peshawar and accept a British envoy, of Indian birth, at his court. Henceforth the Government of India kept a Muslim agent, called *vakil*, at the court of Kabul. But the Amir withdrew his agent in 1858 and did not appoint any successor.

The friendship of the Amir, restored by the treaty of 1855, and further strengthened by the war with the Persians and the new treaty of 1857, stood the Government of India in good stead at the great crisis of 1857. During the great outbreak of that year, constant pressure was being brought upon the Amir by his own *sardars*, to seize this heaven-sent opportunity of recovering Peshawar, if not of exterminating the British power in India. But the Amir remained firm to his friendship with the British. If he had attacked Peshawar, the least he could do was to stop the flow of men and arms from the Panjāb to the besieging army at Delhi. That must have prolonged the siege of Delhi, and this might have turned the scale against the British. As a matter of fact, Sir John Lawrence, the Chief Commissioner of the Panjāb, actually proposed to relinquish all the territories to the west of the Sindhu, and it was the firm determination of Canning that alone saved the situation.[2] So, although it is highly speculative to discuss what might have happened in case Dost Muhammad invaded Peshawar in 1857, there can be hardly any doubt that his benevolent neutrality during that fateful year was highly beneficial to the Government of India.

In 1862, Dost Muhammad wanted to complete the consolidation of his kingdom and attacked Herat. His action was disapproved by Elgin, the Governor-General of India, who consequently recalled his Muslim *vakil* at the court of Kabul. But Dost Muhammad ignored this protest and seized Herat in 1863.

It was the crowning achievement of a romantic career, but it was also the last. Dost Muhammad was aged eighty and died shortly after. Immediately the whole of Afghanistan was convulsed by a war of succession among his sons, sixteen in number. Although one of these, Sher Ali, was designated as heir by his father, the other brothers contested his claim. At one time Sher Ali was driven from both Kabul and Kandahar, but he recovered them in 1868.

During this long period of fratricidal wars the Government of India, though approached for help by several claimants to the throne of Kabul, held severely aloof from Afghan politics. This policy of non-interference, inaugurated by Canning in his minute of 1857,[3] was actively pursued by the new Governor-General Sir John (Lord) Lawrence. The latter was held in such esteem on account of the part he played in the great outbreak of 1857, that his views carried great w ʒht both with his Council and the Secretary of State for India. They whole-heartedly approved of Lawrence's Afghan Policy, which is generally called—or miscalled—'Masterly Inactivity'. Its essence was aboslute non-interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan He proceeded on the principle that no true friendship could subsist between the Government of India and the Amir of Kabul, and therefore, without trying to seek alliance with any claimant to that office by offering help, he should recognize anyone who happened to actually occupy the throne of Kabul or establish himself in any part thereof at any moment. He, therefore, refused any help to Sher Ali, who thrice asked for it in 1866, and also to another brother Afzal Khan

Lawrence's policy was certainly one of 'inactivity,' but whether it was 'masterly' may be justly doubted. For unfortunately, there were other powers like Russia and Persia, to which the disappointed applicants for British help might turn for support. As soon as Lawrence came to know that they did so, he immediately realized his error and enunciated in 1867 the policy of countering such help from Russia or Persia by offering British aid to the rival candidate. The Home Government having approved of it towards the end of that year, he immediately paid a subsidy to Sher Ali who was thereby able to defeat his rivals and establish his undisputed sway over the whole kingdom.: Thus towards the close of his Viceroyalty Lawrence's views underwent an important change In partial modification of his policy of keeping severely aloof from the affairs of Afghanistan, he recommended a new one to the Secretary of State on January 4, 1869, to the effect that the Government of India "should be empowered to give to any *de facto* ruler of Kabul some arms and ammunition and substantial pecuniary assistance, as well as moral support, as occasion may require, but without any formal or defensive alliance".[4a]

The alliance with Sher Ali did not come a moment too soon. For the rapid advance of Russia towards the frontier of Afghanistan constituted a great danger to that country, and was consequently regarded by the Government of India as a menace to the security of India itself.[5]

With her authority firmly established in Tashkent (1865), Samarkand (1868) and Bukhara (1869), Russia had now reached the frontiers of Afghanistan, bringing about a crisis which a section of the British statesmen and military strategists had apprehended years ago. They did not regard Afghanistan as a buffer State, but looked upon its western and northern boundary as constituting the real frontier of India against the aggression of their most formidable rival, Russia. This policy had brought about the First Afghan War but did not die with it. Along with the policy of strict non-interference in Afghan politics, a more active and daring policy was also advocated by a few. As early as 1854, Brigadier-General John Jacob offered a scheme to push forward the frontier of India through Bolan Pass to Quetta, foreshadowing its ultimate advance to Herat, a key position which commands the two main routes from the west to India through Kabul and Kandahar. With the progress of Russian advance, mentioned above, Sir Henry Rawlinson gave a definite shape to what may be called the 'Forward Policy' in a memorandum written in 1868. He started with the premise that the Russian advance to the Oxus was a challenge to the supremacy of the British in South Asia and constituted a grave danger to the security of Indian dominions.[6] As a safeguard against this it was necessary to have strong and friendly powers to the west and north-west of Indian frontier. This could only be achieved by giving up the policy of 'Masterly Inactivity' and substituting in its place a positive policy in Persia and Afghanistan. As immediate practical measures towards this end, Rawlinson suggested that the Amir of Kabul should be granted an annual subsidy and supplied with arms and British officers for training the army. Besides, Quetta should be occupied and a British envoy should be maintained at Kabul.[7]

The first indication of a swing to this new policy may be seen in the change of Sir John Lawrence's policy towards Afghanistan, mentioned above, followed by an arrangement of a conference between the two powers to discuss the political situation. The policy of 'Masterly Inactivity', though thus seemingly given up after reigning supreme for more than a quarter of a century, had still a short lease of life. The change to the 'Forward Policy' was a very slow process and was not effected till six years later, under a new British Cabinet.

The conference proposed by Lawrence did not actually take place till after he had left, and the new Governor-General, Lord Mayo, who continued the Afghan policy of Lawrence, met the Amir, Sher Ali, at Ambala in March, 1869. The Amir was anxious to conclude a definite treaty binding the English to support him against any foreign aggression or internal rebellion. He also demanded from the British

the recognition of his younger son, Abdulla Jan, as his successor, and assistance in the shape of supply of arms and ammunitions, whenever asked for, in addition to a fixed annual subsidy. But the Governor-General was not prepared either to grant any fixed subsidy or assistance in other ways, or to commit his government to any definite policy of unconditional guarantee to Sher Ali's family and kingdom. The Home Government having concurred in this view, he wrote a letter to the Amir saying that the British would make an endeavour to strengthen the government of Kabul, and "view with severe displeasure", any attempt by any rival to disturb the position of the Amir.[7a] These were vague words which did not really mean much and could hardly satisfy the Amir. Although the Viceroy was authorized to promise money, arms and ammunition to the Amir at the full discretion of his advisers, Lord Mayo only told the Amir that his application for assistance would be received always "with consideration and respect." Mayo also evaded the question of recognizing Abdulla Jan as successor of the Amir. Naturally the Amir was very much discontented. The only effect of the conference was to remove the iron curtain which had hitherto separated the two States and the growth of a friendly feeling between them.

Mayo thus fully endorsed the policy enunciated by Lawrence in 1867-68. Such a cold attitude on the part of the British towards an arrangement which, ere long, they were so anxious to conclude, may appear somewhat puzzling. The real explanation seems to be that the British statesmen thought that they could check Russian menace to India more effectively by direct diplomatic negotiations with Russia than by any alliance with Afghanistan which was sure to alienate that power It was hoped that Russia might be induced to accept a definite limit to her expansion It was accordingly proposed that the Oxus should be fixed as the boundary between the spheres of interest of the two countries. To this Russia did not agree, but in 1873, the Russian foreign office categorically stated, and Gorchakoff gave "positive assurance", that His Imperial Majesty looked upon Afghanistan as completely outside the sphere within which Russia might be called upon to exercise her influence.[7b] It meant security of Afghanistan from Russian attack, but gave a free hand to Russia to extend her dominions up to the border of Afghanistan. Russia took full advantage of the position and in 1873 added to his vast Asiatic dominions the Khanate of Khiva on the other side of the Oxus

In spite of the guarantee given by Russia to Britain not to encroach upon any territory in Afghanistan, the Amir could hardly be expected to view with equanimity the advance of Russian outpost to

the very border of his kingdom. So he once more sought for a definite promise of British help in case of Russian attack. A conference was held at Simla in July, 1873. Lord Northbrook, the Governor-General, being deeply impressed by the reasonableness of Amir's request, proposed to assure him "that if he unreservedly accepts and acts on our advice in all external relations, we will help him with money, arms, and troops, if necessary to expel unprovoked invasion. We to be the judge of the necessity."[8]

The Home authorities, however, did not accept Northbrook's proposal. They reiterated the view that as Russia guaranteed the neutrality of Afghanistan, the Amir had no cause of alarm from that quarter. Northbrook was therefore asked to give the Amir merely a general assurance that "we shall maintain our settled policy in Afghanistan."[9] The Amir could hardly be blamed if he interpreted it to mean that the British Government would do nothing to help Afghanistan so long as its own interest was not affected.

The Amir was naturally annoyed at the British for the complacency with which they viewed the advance of Russia towards his kingdom. Two other causes soon increased the bitterness of his feeling. In an evil moment the Government of India had undertaken the thankless task of arbitrating on the boundary disputes in Seistan between Afghanistan and Persia. Their decision "sorely displeased Sher Ali, who felt—as many Anglo-Indians felt with him—that in that transaction his interests had been sacrificed to the cause of Anglo-Persian amity."[9a]

The Amir was further offended by the refusal of the Government of India to support the claim of a younger son, Abdullah Jan, whom he had chosen his heir apparent in supersession of his eldest son Yakub, who had rebelled against his authority. The Amir also took exception to the proceedings of the British in Kalat, to be noted later, and the assistance which, he believed, his rebellious son Yakub Khan was receiving from the British.[9b]

As a result of all this Sher Ali commenced friendly overtures with Russia. The nature of his correspondence and the motive behind it are alike involved in obscurity. It is impossible to determine whether he meant to establish a definite alliance with Russia, or merely intended to use his overtures as a means to alarm England and thereby force her to concede those demands which she had hitherto refused to grant; or whether he tried to gain security by balancing one great power against another. So far as can be judged from available records, the correspondence was of a complimentary nature such as could be normally expected between two neighbouring States who seek to remain at peace with each other. There was

nothing in such exchange of letters to which the Government of India could reasonably take exception.[19] But the views of that Government towards Afghanistan underwent a radical change by a change of Ministry in Britain.

In the general election of 1874 the Liberal Party under Gladstone suffered a crushing defeat and Disraeli was returned to power with a large majority. While Gladstone's Cabinet adhered to Lawrence's policy in Afghanistan, Disraeli, like Palmerston, was a strong Russophobe, and an ardent advocate of the 'Forward Policy' mentioned above. Lord Salisbury, the Secretary of State for India in the new Cabinet, also shared his views. The result was a violent swing in the Afghan policy of the Government of India.

Nothing illustrates more forcibly the effect of the telegraphic communication between India and England than the increasingly dominant part taken by the home authorities in shaping the policy of the Government of India. In those days when a correspondence between India and England was a question of months, the Government of India had, and was tacitly authorized to take decision on urgent matters on their own responsibility, without any reference to, far less approval of, the authorities at home Now the Government of India had to take every important decision after full consultation with, and the approval of, the home authorities.

The Afghan policy of the Government of India is a good illustration of the above point It is only a truism to say, as Morley said about thirty years later, that England cannot have two foreign policies, one at home and another in India; so, with the facilities afforded by telegraphic communication, the home authorities dictated the foreign policy to the Government of India which was reduced to the position of merely carrying out the orders The initiative had definitely passed from India to Britain

The new British Cabinet of 1874 had adopted a new imperial policy in Central Asia as will be explained in Ch XXXIII. It was also unnerved by still further advance of Russia. The Russian expedition against the Tekke Turcomans and the occupation of Kizil Arvat portended the conquest of Merv and possibly also of Herat. The Cabinet therefore decided upon a total reversal of the policy hitherto adopted towards Afghanistan and its ruler. Salisbury revived the old projects of occupying Quetta as a frontier post, and stationing a British agent permanently in Afghanistan.

Northbrook knew full well that nothing was more distasteful to the Amir than accepting a permanent British envoy. So when Salisbury directed him to take steps to establish a British agent at Herat,

he pointed out that it was not only unnecessary, particularly at the present moment (when the Amir was sorely offended at the British as mentioned above), but it might even lead to very unpleasant consequences. He also referred to Lord Mayo's undertaking that "no European officers should be placed as residents in his cities."[11] But Salisbury insisted that his orders must be carried into effect. Thereupon Northbrook resigned and was succeeded by Lord Lytton (April, 1876), who was an ardent advocate of the 'Forward Policy', and soon became its most extreme exponent. He had learnt the lessons of imperialism only too well at the new school of politics headed by Disraeli as will be described in Ch. XXXIII.

The effect of the new appointment was immediately perceived in the affairs of the Khan of Kalat in Baluchistan. The treaty concluded by Major John Jacob with Nasir Khan, Chief of Kalat, on May 14, 1854, "admitted the ruler of that country" and his successors into the Indian protectorate on terms of subordinate co-operation. The Khan agreed to admit British garrison in his country and not to enter into communication with any other State. In return for an undertaking to provide for free commerce and the protection of British territory from plunder and outrage, a subsidy of Rs. 50,000 a year was guaranteed to him and his successors.[11a] On the death of Nasir Khan in 1857 his half-brother Khudadad Khan succeeded him, though not without disputes and dissensions. The Government of India doubled the subsidy in order to strengthen his hands, and the grateful ruler was obliging enough to grant a lease of the Quetta District, and make other important concessions, such as the extension of telegraph lines through his territory to strengthen the frontier of India. He also agreed to a demarcation of the Sindh-Kalat frontier.

The internal disorder in Baluchistan, however, continued. It was mainly due to the rival claims of the Khan and his chiefs. The former claimed to be the supreme ruler of the State, while the latter maintained that he was merely the head of a confederacy of chiefs Lord Mayo, true to his frontier policy, tried to compose the differences between the two parties in order to establish a stable and permanent central authority. He authorized a high British officer to act as arbitrator between the Khan and his chiefs[11b] During the Viceroyalty of Northbrook there was a prolonged fight between the Khan and the chiefs, and the Government of India intervened in order to open the Bolan Pass for purposes of trade Major Sandeman was sent on a goodwill mission, and he succeeded in reconciling the Khan to his rebellious chiefs. But as soon as Sandeman withdrew from the scene, quarrels broke out again and he returned with

a military escort of 1,000 men. It was a very good opportunity for securing possession of Quetta, but Northbrook, true to the policy of Lawrence and Mayo, did not take any action in that direction. Sandeman confined his attention to the settlement of disputes and the restoration of peace, and succeeded in his efforts. But before he actually started on his return journey, Lord Lytton took charge of his office as Governor-General. He was against the withdrawal of the mission led by Sandeman, and sent his Private Secretary, Col. G. P. Colley, wth instructions to conclude a secret treaty with the Khan of Kalat. With a British force to back up the negotiations, the Khan was, of course, obliging enough to sign the Treaty of Jacobabad (December 8, 1876) which provided "for the permanent occupation" of his territory by a British military force, and the right to station troops at Quetta. Under instructions from the Viceroy, Colley occupied Quetta in 1877.[12] The British influence was also strengthened in Chitral and Gilgit at the same time.

Lord Lytton was definitely instructed to establish a permanent British envoy in Afghanistan, and in order to gain the consent of Sher Ali, he was to be offered the terms which he had asked for, but did not get in 1873.[13] So, within a month of his arrival in India, he communicated to Amir Sher Ali, on 10 May, 1878, his intention to depute Sir Lewis Pelly to Kabul. The letter was discussed for days in the Kabul *darbar*. In his reply, dated 22 May, the Amir pointed out that the political questions were sufficiently discussed at the Simla conference and there was, therefore, no urgency or necessity of sending a British agent to Kabul. If necessary, he would send a confidential agent to the Viceroy. The Amir then reiterated his old objections against receiving a British envoy which were fully discussed at the Kabul *darbar*. The Amir wrote to say that he was not in a position to guarantee the security of life to the envoy, a fear—it may be remarked in passing—that was fully justified by events which occurred both before and after it was written. Secondly, the Amir pointed out that if he allowed a British envoy at Kabul he could not very well refuse the same privilege to Russia. Thirdly the Amir was also afraid that the British envoy might make demands upon him which he would be unable to accept, and thereby worsen the situation. In reply to Amir's letter Atta Muhammad, the Muslim *vakil* of the Government of India at Kabul, was instructed to point out that the first point was not worthy of credence, the third was groundless, and the second had no force as the Russian Government had given a pledge not to interfere in the affairs of Afghanistan. It was ultimately suggested by the Amir that Atta Muhammad should visit the Viceroy, and the proposal was accepted.

Atta Muhammad visited Simla and fully explained the nature of Amir's objections to the proposal of receiving a British envoy. Lord Lytton took the opportunity of formulating his views very definitely on October 10, 1876. He would agree to give the Amir an annual subsidy and military assistance in case of unprovoked aggression of his territory. He also agreed to recognize the heir nominated by the Amir. In return he would expect the Amir (1) to accept a British Resident at Kabul or special missions whenever required; (2) allow British agents to reside at Herat and elsewhere; (3) open Afghanistan freely to all Englishmen, officials or non-officials, providing for their safety as far as practicable; and, lastly, (4) not to hold any communication with a foreign power, specially Russia, without the knowledge of the British.[14]

In course of his interviews with Atta Muhammad, Lytton adopted a haughty and dictatorial attitude and threatened the Amir with dire consequences if he failed to fall in with his views. He broadly hinted that Russia was willing to enter into an agreement with Britain about the partition of Afghanistan between them. He then told Atta Muhammad with brutal frankness that if the Amir did not immediately grasp the hand of alliance extended to him, England might come to an understanding with Russia "which might have the effect of wiping Afghanistan out of the map altogether."[14a]

Apparently as a result of Atta Muhammad's representation on his return to the Kabul *darbar*, a conference was arranged at Peshawar in January, 1877, between the British plenipotentiary, Sir Lewis Pelly, and the Afghan envoy, Nur Muhammad. It dragged on for days together on the preliminary question of keeping a permanent British envoy in Afghanistan. The Government of India regarded this as the basis of all further proposals, and the Afghan Government treated it as altogether unacceptable.

The point was ably debated on both sides when Nur Muhammad, who was ill throughout the negotiations, suddenly died on March 26, 1877. Lytton closed the conference four days later, though he knew that a fresh envoy, nominated by the Amir, was already on his way to join the conference at Peshawar, with authority, it was believed, "to accept eventually all the conditions of the British Government". Lytton's action is difficult to understand and can only be explained on the ground that he did not trust the 'savage' prince, as he used to call the Amir, who, in his opinion, had gone towards Russia beyond all redemption.[14b] There was, however, no basis for such an assumption, though it seems to have been an innate belief of Lytton from the very beginning. The parley at Simla and

the conference at Peshawar must, in that case, be regarded as pretext for precipitating hostilities.

Sir Lewis Pelly left Peshawar on April 12, 1877, and the British native agent at Kabul was withdrawn. There was thus a complete break in political relations between India and Afghanistan, which lasted for several months

The break-down of the Peshawar conference was viewed with great indignation, real or pretended, by Lord Lytton. He penned an elaborate minute, in course of which he observed: "The British government now considers itself free to withdraw from the present Amir of Kabul, if further provoked by him, the support of its friendship and protection."[15] What the "friendship and protection" actually amounted to, it is not easy to determine. But the withdrawal of one or both probably meant, in the eyes of Lytton, a free hand given to him to try other means to serve his purpose, such as political disintegration of Afghanistan. For a time he applied himself to this task, and there is no doubt that he was making preparations for an actual war with Afghanistan. For the occupation of Quetta was followed by other measures which could have no other object than facilitating a military expedition against Afghanistan. Roads were constructed or repaired, new bridges were made and old ones expanded, and huge military stores were accumulated at Rawalpindi and Kohat.[16]

Lytton's bellicose attitude was favoured by circumstances in Europe where a war broke out between Russia and Turkey, and it seemed inevitable, almost imminent, that Great Britain would declare war against Russia.[17] It can hardly be wondered at, therefore, that as soon as troubles with England began in Europe, Russia sought to strike England in Asia.[18] So she tried to develop the friendly intercourse with Afghanistan which had already begun, and even made an ostensible display to rouse the fears of England. Kaufmann, the Russian Governor of Turkestan, ordered three columns of troops to advance from Tashkent towards Afghan border and intimated to the Amir in June, 1878, that he was sending a Russian officer, Stolietoff, to inform him of all that was hidden in his mind. The Amir immediately issued orders forbidding the Russian envoy to enter his country. The latter, however, ignored the order, and arrived at Kabul on 22 July.[19]

In the meantime a European Congress had met at Berlin on June 13, and a political settlement was effected among the great powers in Europe by a treaty at Berlin, which was signed on July 13, 1878. As soon as this news reached Kaufmann, he recalled the troops

and sent an intimation of the settlement to Stolietoff, asking him not to commit Russia to any positive engagement with the Amir.

But though, as in the case of the first Afghan War, the *casus belli* was removed, the outbreak of hostilities was not averted. For, in both cases, the British Government wanted to take advantage of the situation in securing a foothold in Afghanistan, and though ostensible causes of enmity were removed, they were unwilling to let slip the opportunity. Lord Lytton wrote to Lord Cranbrook, the Secretary of State, that the Treaty of Berlin created the most favourable opportunity of coercing the Amir, presumably because it had removed the danger of Russian intervention. The British position, he pointed out, was strengthened by the occupation of Quetta. "From our commanding position at Quetta," wrote he, "we could now at any moment lay our hands swiftly upon Candahar, where our superior weapons and organization would sweep away, like flies, the badly armed, badly drilled and badly disciplined troops he (the Amir) could oppose to us."[19a]

The origin of the war that ensued thus bears a close resemblance to that of the Crimean War that England waged against Russia twenty-five years earlier. There, too, the withdrawal of the Russian troops from the trans-Danubian territories of Turkey left England (and France) apparently with no *casus belli*, but a 'defensive' (?) war was waged all the same against Russia, although there was no attack from that side. For, as has been wittily, but very correctly, observed, "it is easier to let loose the dogs of war than to catch and kennel them again."[20] British history in India is replete with instances of this kind.

As soon as Lytton heard the news of Stolietoff's arrival at Kabul he insisted on Sher Ali's acceptance of an English mission, and selected Sir Neville Chamberlain to lead it.[21] An Indian emissary, Gholam Hussain, was sent in advance to notify the Amir of the mission. He arrived at Kabul on 17 August. Abdullah Jan, the favourite son of Sher Ali whom he nominated heir apparent, died on that very day, and this naturally caused a delay in the despatch of Amir's reply.

In the meantime Chamberlain, the British envoy-designate, was asked to start for Kabul on September 16, and was definitely instructed to force his way against all resistance short of armed opposition. In conformity with these instructions Waterfield, the Commissioner of Peshawar, wrote to the Governors of Ali Masjid, Dakka and Jalalabad—the three fortified posts on the way to Kabul—that "any refusal of a free passage to the mission or any interruption of its

progress would be regarded as an act of hostility." This direct communication to the Amir's officers, over his head, was justly regarded by the Amir as a slight to his authority. He was naturally angry and, though he did not altogether refuse permission, he plainly told Gholam Hussain that he did not like the manner of sending the mission which was highly objectionable. By way of contrast, he pointed out that the Russian mission had come with his permssion. The real position was clarified by his *Wazir* in a private conference with Gholam Hussain, the very next day. The *Wazir* represented that his master had been compelled by the exposed state of the country and the estrangement of England to allow the Russian envoy Stolietoff to proceed. But "he chose to cover his weakness by a voluntary and dignified acceptance of the inevitable," meaning that the Russian envoy was not welcome, but tolerated as a necessary evil in order to avoid the public scandal of appearing to yield to his forcible entry. *The Wazir went on to say that the Amir would do the same* as regards Sir Neville Chamberlain and his companions, if the Government of India would but give him the chance. The *Wazir* also informed Gholam Hussain that as soon as some servants of the Russian mission, who were lying ill, had recovered, the remaining members of the mission would be suitably dismissed, and that the Amir would then send a confidential messenger to conduct the British mission to Kabul and make himself responsible for its safety and good treatment.

Gholam Hussain sent a gist of this conversation in a letter written on 13 September, in which he added his own opinion that the dismissal of the Russian and the reception of the English mission would take place soon after the Id ceremony. Two days later, on 15 September, he again wrote that Afghan ministers were still hopeful that matters would be satisfactorily arranged and that it was his own belief that there was still a chance left for further discussions if the entrance of the British mission into Afghan territory were delayed.

But this was not to be. Already on 12 September, Cavagnari had commenced negotiations with the headmen of the tribes occupying the route along the Khyber Pass for a free passage through their territories. As all these tribesmen were subjects of the Amir, such secret negotiations with them were a direct violation of good faith and all international etiquettes and conventions. Probably the British mission wanted to follow in the footsteps of the Russian. Unfortunately for them, Faiz Muhammad, the Afghan Commandant of the fort of Ali Masjid, which guarded the Khyber Pass, was a man of a sterner stuff. As soon as the negotiations of Cavagnari came to

his knowledge, he sent peremptory orders to the tribal headmen to retire to their own territories. Cavagnari was in a great dilemma, as the tribal headmen would not dare disobey the orders of Faiz Muhammad unless the British immediately and unequivocally enlisted them on their side, of course, for a good consideration. So he referred the matter to the Viceroy. Lytton, in reply, ordered Cavagnari to inform Faiz Muhammad that the British mission would start immediately and ask him whether he would guarantee a free passage through the Khyber Pass. "If he say 'yes', the headmen might depart. If he say 'no', or send an evasive reply, then settle matters with the tribal headmen and advance". So ran the Viceregal command. Faiz Muhammad met the British Officers and told them in a friendly spirit that like them, 'he was merely a servant whose duty was to carry out orders of his master.' If the Amir sent permission, he himself would safely lead the mission through the Pass and no other escort would be necessary; but so long as such permission was withheld, it would be his duty to oppose the missions' entry into the Pass, and he would fire if the British tried to advance without such permission.

The letter of Gholam Hussain, dated 15 September, reached Chamberlain on the 19th September. Instead of accepting his advice to wait, Chamberlain wired to Lytton objecting to delay. He proposed, however, that instead of the mission as a whole making a forcible entry into the Pass, Cavagnari would proceed to Ali Masjid with only a few men. If they were refused permission to advance further, Cavagnari should consider the refusal as tantamount to having been fired on and return to Peshawar. Lytton having accepted this proposal to make a test case, Cavagnari advanced with a few followers, but they were stopped about a mile from Ali Masjid. Cavagnari and his party immediately returned to Jamrud. As soon as this news reached the Viceroy he dissolved the mission.

It is a debatable point how far, throughout these transactions, Lytton had 'overrun the wishes' of Beaconsfield and Salisbury, as has been claimed by some.[22] Both of them were advocates of the Forward Policy, though as noted in Ch. XXXIII, Salisbury was more moderate than Beaconsfield. In his letter dated 4 October, 1877, Salisbury asked Lytton not to put any hostile pressure on the Amir.[23] Beaconsfield, however, backed up Lytton. He wrote to the Foreign Secretary on April 1, 1877: "We must completely and unflinchingly support Lytton; we chose him for this very kind of business." Further, Beaconsfield said in his annual speech in the Guildhall "that though the Government were by no means apprehensive of an invasion of India from its north-western frontier", yet that frontier was

a "haphazard and not a scientific one" and "stood in need of rectification."[24] Further, as noted in Ch. XXXIII, there are good grounds to believe that Lytton derived his inspiration from the Prime Minister, who fully shared his ambitious designs. On the other hand, according to Beaconsfield's own assertion, Lytton had exceeded his instructions. On September 26, Disraeli wrote to Cranbrook: "He (Lord Lytton) was told to wait until we had received the answer from Russia to our remonstrance. I was very strong on this, having good reasons for my opinion. He disobeyed us. I was assured by Lord Salisbury that, under no circumstances, was the Khyber to be attempted. Nothing would have induced me to consent to such a step."[24a] There is no doubt that Lytton adopted a high-handed and dictatorial attitude. He "had come to regard the Amir with an animosity almost personal," and "preferred to coerce him."[25] As regards the frontier, Lytton recommended in his despatches to the home authorities "that, though for political reasons the Indian Government should exercise influence up to the Oxus, it should regard the Hindu Kush as the real boundary, and strengthen itself by the occupation of various points at the *debouches* of the passes."[26] In his minute to his Council, dated 4 September, Lytton put forth as his dream and ideal the British dominance over the whole of Central Asia.[27]

Both Beaconsfield, the Prime Minister, and Salisbury, the Foreign Secretary, tried to secure the goodwill of Russia by peaceful means and avoid, or at least postpone for a year, any flare-up in Afghanistan. On receipt of Lytton's telegram dated June 7, 1878, about the despatch of a Russian envoy to Kabul, followed by other telegrams, the home authorities permitted him to demand of the Amir the reception of a British mission, but they "desired that the mission should proceed not by the Khyber Pass where it was expected and likely to be stopped, but by way of the Bolan and Kandahar where opposition would have been more difficult and unlikely." But Lytton, to whom the final choice of the route seems to have been left, chose the more provocative one,[28] and deliberately precipitated the crisis. Anyone who reads without prejudice the narrative of events given above, ending with the retreat of Cavagnari from Ali Masjid to Peshawar, cannot but regard Lytton's whole action as a deliberate provocation to war. This was also the general view in England shared even by a prominent section of the British Cabinet. When the Ali Masjid incident was telegraphically communicated by Lytton, "Salisbury and the Lord Chancellor severely attacked Lytton's conduct and urged the expediency of curbing his future proceedings. Cranbrook, the Secretary of State for India, strongly defended the Governor-General."[29]

Like the Cabinet, the public opinion in England was also divided on the question. "The affair (of Ali Masjid) was at first reported as an 'insolent rebuff,' though subsequent explanations showed that the behaviour of the Afghan officer had been correct. Military men declared that acquiescence in the incident would be fatal to British prestige, and that view obtained with the London Press. Lord Lawrence upheld the cause of peace." "Have not the Afghans a right," he wrote, "to resist our forcing a mission on them, bearing in mind to what such missions often lead, and what Burnes's mission in 1837 did actually bring upon them?"[30]

The future course of action was hotly debated in the British Cabinet. The Prime Minister proposed, by way of compromise, the occupation of the Kurram Valley, not as an act of war, but as "a material guarantee for the granting of the English demands," but "Cranbrook refused to have anything to do with so half-hearted a measure." The Cabinet's hands were forced by the 'Jingo' politicians, both in India and England, "who were calling in chorus for the immediate chastisement of a half-savage ruler who had proved truculent as well as treacherous."[31] The Cabinet did not sanction an immediate declaration of war, but authorized the Viceroy to write to the Amir, demanding "an apology and an undertaking to receive a permanent British Mission within his territory, failing which his intentions were to be regarded as hostile and he was to be treated as a declared enemy of Great Britain." The letter was delivered to the Afghan Commander at Ali Masjid on November 2. and no reply having been received within the time limit fixed, November 20, three British forces were set in motion to invade Afghanistan. [31a]

Though the war which thus broke out was not very popular in England, and ominous forebodings were uttered by veteran statesmen like Gladstone, both the Houses of Parliament not only approved of the war, but also gave their acquiescence in the ungracious step of throwing the expenses of the operations on the revenues of India.[32]

Before describing the details of the campaign it is necessary to discuss, at some length, the justification offered by some British historians to this aggressive campaign. The basis of this justification is the assumption that Sher Ali displayed manifest hostility by his acceptance of Russian alliance, and it was due to Russian instigation that he refused to accept the British mission, fully relying on Russian help against the English.[33] It is to be remembered, however, that no authentic account is available of the proposals made by Russia to the Amir and his response thereto, and there is no evidence

to show that Sher Ali sought alliance with Russia or entered into any positive engagement with her. [33a] It has also been urged that Sher Ali had actually concluded a "treaty of close alliance with Russia which would have given the Russians virtual control over the internal rule and external affairs of Afghanistan."[34] The only evidence in support of it is a statement made after the war by two ministers, who wrote from memory the terms of the treaty which were corroborated by Yakub.[35] If we remember that Yakub was placed on the throne of Kabul after Sher Ali had fled to Russia, that even Cavagnari described him as fickle of purpose, ignorant of business, and weak of mind,[35a] and also that his character and activities were such that he was thought unworthy of the throne and had later to be removed to India by the British themselves, it is difficult to put any faith on him or his ministers who could not produce any documentary evidence but merely quoted from memory the terms of a treaty which hardly fit in with the spirit of independence throughout displayed by Sher Ali. Besides, from its very nature, the treaty must have been of such a confidential nature that Sher Ali would be hardly likely to communicate it to his rebellious son and his adherents. It may be added that other assertions about Russian influence on the Amir, specially those referred to above, are also mostly based on Yakub's information. It is hardly necessary to point out that as all this information was supplied by Yakub long after the commencement of the Afghan War, it cannot be cited as a justification for that campaign, even if it were true. But against all this story of Sher Ali's intrigues with Russia, based upon very doubtful source of information, one may quote the testimony of Prince Lebanoff, the Russian ambassador in London, who told Granville in 1881 that all correspondence in the archives of Russian government prove that "Sher Ali was neither Russian nor English, but an Afghan, desirous of preserving the independence of his country."[36] Every unprejudiced student of history is bound to admit the truth of this view, so far at least as it is possible to form a judgment from the records available to us. Even Disraeli admitted that the Russian mission to Kabul was not a very serious matter [36a] There is hardly any doubt that the war was forced upon Afghanistan by Lord Lytton in pursuance of his grandiose policy of extending British dominions to Central Asia, referred to above. What the Amir did or failed to do is of little consequence, as this cannot but be treated merely as excuses which have never been wanting even for the most wantonly aggressive campaign when once it was decided upon.

Reference may be made in this connection to an observation made by Lord Clarendon in 1869, in connection with the progress

of Russia in Central Asia. "Plausible reasons", said he, "were seldom wanted for the acquisition of territory which the home government never thought it expedient to reject, and could not therefore condemn the motives or the means by which it had been acquired."[37] How far this is applicable to Russia, it is beyond the scope of the present work to inquire. But the general principle, so clearly laid down, is strikingly illustrated by the activities of the Government of India in Burma, Sindh and Afghanistan described in this volume.

As noted above, on 20 November, 1878, the very day on which the ultimatum to Sher Ali expired, three British forces advanced, one destined for Kandahar and the other two to march on Kabul, through the Khyber and Kurram Passes. There was hardly any opposition; Kandahar was occupied without any resistance and Ali Masjid and Jalalabad were occupied (December 20) by the Khyber force without much difficulty. The Kurram column u[illegible]er Roberts had some hard fighting before it dislodged the Afghans from their strong position on the Peiwar Kotal. The enemy deserted the Shutargardan Pass without any fight, leaving the road to Kabul open to the British force. It seems that while the Government of India made all preparations for the war, the Amir was not at all ready for the contingency. On 22 December, he publicly announced his departure for Russia, and left his country, but suddenly died at Mazar-i-Sharif on 21 February, 1879. A treaty was concluded at Gandammak on 26 May, 1879, with Yakub, the son of Sher Ali, whom the British recognized as the new Amir. By this treaty Yakub agreed to hand over to the English the control over the Khyber and Mishni passes as well as the actual administration of the districts of Kurram, Pishin and Sibi,[38] regulate his foreign relations in accordance with the advice of the Governor-General, and to accept a permanent British envoy at Kabul. In return the British promised to support the Amir against foreign aggression and grant him an annual subsidy of six lakhs of Rupees.

Cavagnari, who had conducted the negotiation, was nominated Resident at Kabul. He arrived at that city on 24 July, 1879, with about 200 men, including servants and followers, and fixed his residence at Bala Hissar.[39] Things passed quietly for some days, but troubles began with the arrival of a body of troops from Herat. A swaggering and violently anti-British attitude marked their activities from the very beginning. At last on 3 September, they attacked the Residency which was defended by only four British officers and a handful of native soldiers. The Amir did not despatch any troops to protect the Residency but only sent Daud Khan, the Commander-in-Chief, to remonstrate with the rebel sodiery. Daud

was bayoneted, though the injury, either by design or by chance, was very slight. Cavagnari made a brave resistance, but was killed with all his followers, and his head was paraded through the streets.

The retribution was swift. Kandahar was re-occupied, the Shutargardan Pass was seized, and Roberts crossed over it into Kushi, when the Amir arrived at the British camp as a fugitive. Roberts met with little opposition until he reached within ten miles of Kabul where the Afghans were routed, after a sharp engagement, at Charasia. They evacuated Bala Hissar and the strongly fortified cantonments at Sherpur in its neighbourhood. Roberts occupied Kabul on 11 October, [40] and after issuing a formal proclamation took provisional possession of Afghanistan. The ring-leaders of the late insurrection, eighty-seven in number, were executed, and Yakub abdicated the throne. There was, however, a general rising of the Afghans, chiefly at the instigation of the Mullas. They found a leader in Muhammad Jan and repulsed the British troops at Chardeh valley, forcing them to take refuge within Sherpur cantonments. Muhammad Jan proclaimed Musa Jan, the son of Yakub, Amir of Afghanistan. It was a critical moment for the British forces, for they were forced to withdraw from the Shutargardan Pass, thus cutting off communication with India, and Kandahar was threatened by Ayub Khan, the brother of Yakub, who was in possession of Herat. The siege of Sherpur continued from December 11 to 23, but reinforcement having arrived from Jagdulak, Roberts took the offensive and re-occupied Kabul. Although a British force advancing from Kandahar captured Ghazni on 21 April, 1880, the city of Kandahar itself was in great danger. Ayub Khan left Herat at the end of June, 1880, for Kandahar, and General Burrows moved out to meet him. He joined Sher Ali, the newly appointed Governor of Kandahar, on July 11 at Girishk. But four days later Sher Ali's troops mutinied and Burrows had to fall back. On 27 July he marched to Maiwand to intercept Ayub's army, but suffered a crushing defeat, leaving nearly a thousand dead on the field. The remnants of the British force retreated to Kandahar amid great difficulties, but were forced to abandon the cantonments and shut themselves up in the fortress of Kandahar which was besieged by Ayub Khan.

As soon as the news of this terrible disaster reached Kabul, Roberts marched with 10,000 soldiers to relieve Kandahar. He left Sherpur cantonments, near Kabul, on 8 August, and reached Robat in the vicinity of Kandahar on the 28th, covering a distance of 303 miles in 20 days. He reached Kandahar on 31st August, 1880, and next day defeated Ayub Khan, forcing him to raise the siege and

retire. There was no further armed opposition to the British in Afghanistan after this.

Two aspects of this campaign deserve a passing notice. The first is the "barbarities" committed by the British troops. The Afghans were treated as rebels and, in spite of General Roberts's denial, the policy of "indiscriminate hanging and burning of villages," was long continued. "A military Commission was set up in Kabul, which began operations in the spirit of the Government's order that 'punishment should be swift, stern, and impressive'. This was taken to justify the hasty execution of anyone whom an informer chose to accuse of complicity in the events of September 3, or of taking any part in the fighting at Charasia. An account left by Colonel MacGregor, a member of the Commission, shows that men were hanged on the most trivial evidence, sometimes of their avowed enemies. Troops were sent into the neighbourhood to collect prisoners, and also to forage. They burnt any village where there was the least show of opposition".[40a]

The second was the complete breakdown of the military accounts department. "The original estimate for the war had been under six millions. A further actual outlay of five millions had been incurred without the knowledge of the financial department, and another seven millions were required for the second campaign".[40b] The Indian exchequer had, of course, to foot the bill.

The settlement of Afghanistan now engaged the attention of the Government of India. As noted above, Yakub had abdicated the throne. According to the British authorities it was a voluntary act on his part, but Yakub himself declared that he was forced to abdicate by ungenerous and cruel pressure of the British, and wanted to get back the throne.[41] But whatever may be the truth, he was no longer regarded as eligible to the throne of Kabul. A committee of inquiry, set up shortly after the occupation of Kabul by Roberts, absolved him of any direct responsibility for the insurrection of the Herat troops, resulting in the murder of Cavagnari and his followers; but according to its finding he was "culpably indifferent to the fate of the envoy and his companions, and totally disregarded the solemn obligations he had undertaken to protect the British embassy".[42] Yakub was removed to India on December 1, followed, a week later, by all the important *sardars* (chiefs) save one, who had been arrested on October 12. Some have regarded this as the cause of the general rising of the Afghans, mentioned above.[43] But whatever that may be, there was a demand on the part of the Afghans for the restoration of Yakub or nomination of his son as Amir. Lytton

definitely set his face against one who was even indirectly responsible for the murder of Cavagnari, and threatened to resign if Yakub were restored.[44]

Lytton's first idea immediately after the occupation of Kabul by Roberts was to disintegrate Afghanistan. Portions of it had already come into the possession of the British by the Treaty of Gandammak with Yakub Khan. It was now proposed to create Kandahar into a separate principality, hand over Herat and Seistan to Persia, while Kabul, reduced in importance, and controlled by a garrison at some point beyond the Shutargardan Pass, was to be handed over to a dependable Afghan *sardar*. The Cabinet having concurred in this view, Wali Sher Ali Khan of the Sadozai clan was recognized as the ruler of Kandahar and negotiations were begun with Persia about Herat.[45]

There was some difficulty in finding out a suitable ruler for Afghanistan. But a very unexpected candidate appeared in the person of Abdur Rahman, a nephew of Sher Ali and grandson of Dost Muhammad, who had left his country in 1868 after Sher Ali's accession to power, and had been living since mainly at Samarkand, under the protection of Russia. Early in 1880, with the permission of Russian authorities, he set out with a small party to fish in the troubled waters of Afghanistan.

This adventurer "told the tribesmen on his arrival at the frontier, that he would take them all with him to fight against the British".[46] At the same time he entered into negotiations with Lepel Griffin, the English Political Agent at Kabul, for the throne of Afghanistan, and gave evidence of his friendship for the English by despatching letters to all Afghan chiefs to help Roberts to retrieve the disaster of Maiwand, thus facilitating his march from Kabul to Kandahar.[47] He gave evidence of the strength of his character by objecting, from the very start of his negotiations with Griffin, to the separation of Kandahar from Kabul.[48]

Equally shrouded in mystery is the attitude of Lord Lytton to Abdur Rahman. There were two points against the latter which must have seriously weighed with the Viceroy. He was too intimately associated with Russia, and he had too strong a personality to accept the position of an obedient vassal to the Viceroy of India. It is therefore difficult to believe, as has been represented by some,[49] that Lytton looked kindly on his candidature for the throne as soon as he heard of his arrival. The probability rather is that Lytton had no confidence in Abdur Rahman, as is definitely asserted by some authorities.[50]

There is, however, no doubt that negotiations were opened with Abdur Rahman. But before any final decision could be taken, Lytton had to quit the scene of his activities. As a result of the general election in Britain, Disraeli's ministry was replaced by that of Gladstone, and Ripon, who was appointed the Governor-General of India, took charge on June 8, 1880.

The new Ministry in Britain was at first disposed to reverse entirely the Afghan policy of its predecessor, and, relinquishing all the territories that had been gained, to fall back upon the old frontier. In accordance with this policy the evacuation of Sibi and Pishin was promised in the Queen's speech in the opening session of 1881. But as had often happened in the past, the new Viceroy, who had come out to India with a determination to carry out the new policy, changed his views as soon as he was amid new environment.

So, ultimately a compromise was effected. The scheme of disintegrating Afghanistan was abandoned, but Pishin and Sibi were retained by the British. Terms were offered to Abd-ur-rahman by which he would undertake not to hold any relations with any foreign powers save with the approval of the Government of India, which on its part assured the Amir that "if any foreign power should attempt to interfere in Afghanistan, and if such interference should lead to unprovoked aggression on the dominions of your Highness, in that event the British Government would be prepared to aid you to such extent and in such manner as may appear to the British Government necessary in repelling it".[51]

Abdur Rahman accepted these terms in a conference at Zimma (31 July-1 August, 1880). Three years later the Viceroy, Lord Ripon, renewed the assurance of protecting the Amir against unprovoked aggression and also bestowed on him an annual subsidy of twelve lakhs of Rupees

1. In writing the names Herāt, Kandāhār., Kābul, Afghān, and Afghānistān, diacritical marks have not been used to indicate long *a* (*ā*).
1a. The credit for this treaty is wrongly given by some to Lawrence (Repington, *Policy and Arms*, p. 228), and by others to Edwardes. The first supposition is definitely wrong as Lawrence was opposed to the idea and took no part in the treaty save signing it. Nor is the entire credit for initiating the policy due to Edwardes as is supposed by many (*CHI*, VI 404). The initiative and instructions of Dalhousie in the matter should not be ignored (Warner, II. 82 ff).
2. Tytler, 130; *Sketches*, I, 37.
3. Tytler, 128.
4. *CHI*, VI. 407.
4a. *Mayo*, p. 124.
5. For fuller details cf. Ch. XXXIII.
6. This may be deduced from the instructions to the Russian ambassador in London, in 1884 (quoted in *CHI*, VI, 408).
7. For an exposition of the 'Forward Policy', cf. Tytler, 130 ff.; Wyllie, Chs. I-III;

Eastwick. It has been further discussed in Chapter XXXIII, which may be regarded as supplementary to this Chapter.
7a. *CHBFP*. III. 74-5.
7b. *PHE*., XII. 304.
8. Telegram to the Secretary of State for India, dated 24 July, 1873 (*Parl. Papers*, 1878-79, LVI, 482).
9. Telegram to Northbrook dated 26 July, 1873 (ibid). According to *CHBFP* (III. 77), Northbrook was authorized to give such an assurance. But this is evidently a mistake. Cf. *CHI*, VI, 410-11, which is a later publication, and quotes the telegrams referred to in fn. 8 and 9.
9a. *CHBFP*, III. 76.
9b. D. K. Ghose, *England and Afghanistan*, p. 28.
10. Hannah, I. 190 ff; *CHI*, VI. 412-13.
11. *PHE*, XII. 305.
11a. Warner, II. 102.
11b. *Mayo*, 131-2.
12. Hannah, I, 113-15. *CHBFP*, III. 84.
13. Despatch to the Governor-General, dated 28 February, 1876 (*Parl Papers* 1878-79, LVI. 521).
14. Hannah, I. 81-93.
14a. Ghose, op. cit., 31, and fn. 19.
14b. Ibid, 35.
15. *PHE*, XII. 306. A British historian has justly observed: "Yet Sher Ali's reluctance to receive a British Mission was genuine, and when viewed by the light of subsequent events it must be pronounced reasonable. He felt that its presence would diminish his authority, while, in the event of an outbreak, he would be unable to protect it" (ibid).
16. Hannah, I. 118.
17. *PHE*, XII. 283-291; *Encycl. Br*. (14th Edition), III. 250.
18. This point was emphasized in the instructions referred to in fn. 6 above
19. *CHI*, VI. 417.
19a. Ghose, *op. cit*., 42.
20. *Encycl. Br*. (14th Ed.), VI. 706.
21. The account that follows is based on Hannah, Vol. I, pp. 200-226 The accounts given in *CHI*, VI(417-8), and *CHBFP*, III (pp. 85-6), are very brief and inaccurate.
22. *CHI*, VI. 418, confines this observation to the despatch of the mission. cf *PHE*, XII. 306.
23. Hannah, I. 196-7. Parliamentary Paper, Afghanistan, No. I (1878), pp. 222-4.
24. *PHE*, XII. 307.
24a. G. E. Buckle, *Life of Disraeli*, VI. 382. Disraeli even remarked that by disobeying the orders of the Government Lytton had mutinied (ibid).
25. *PHE*, XII. 306.
26. Ibid, 307. For a fuller exposition of this policy cf. Ch. XXXIII.
27. Hannah, I. 104. Ghose, op. cit., 38-42.
28. *CHI*, VI. 418.
29. Ibid, 418-9. "For the moment the new policy lent itself to the accusation that the Indian Government was picking a quarrel with the Amir in order to rob him of his territory" (*PHE*, XII. 307). For the discussion in the Cabinet, cf. Ghose, op. cit., 42.
30. *PHE*, XII. 306-7.
31. *CHBFP*, III. 86; *CHI*, VI. 418-19.
31a. *CHBFP*, III. 87. Even before the ultimatum expired the British Prime Minister declared in his Guildhall speech that the decision for war had been taken (Buckle, *Life of Disraeli*, VI. 390).
32 *PHE*, XII. 307. Trotter has very rightly observed: "India was saddled with the whole cost of an enterprise decreed by an English Government in furtherance of England's fancied interests alone". (*History of India under Queen Victoria*, I. 89).
33. "Stolietoff urged the Amir to delay matters and if necessary prevent the English mission from reaching Kabul" (*CHI*, VI. 417). The only authority cited for this statement is Robert's report based on Yakub's information. The value of this evidence will be discussed later.
33a. Hannah, I. 190-91.

34. Tytler, 148; Balfour, 370; *PHE*, XII. (306) refers to such a treaty being concluded by Sher Ali on March 29, 1879, but as Sher Ali died before this date, 1879 is probably a printing mistake for 1878.
35. Balfour, 370.
35a. Ibid, 322. Lytton also referred to Yakub as 'incompetent ruler' and 'slippery customer'. Ghose, op. cit., 47.
36. Quoted in Hannah, I. 191.
36a. Buckle, op. cit., 380.
37. Quoted in Tytler, 161.
38. For the terms of the treaty cf. Hannah, II. 349.
"The Scientific frontier" was instituted by the arrangement that the Kurum, Pishin and Shibi valleys would be assigned to the Indian Government though the surplus revenues were to go to the Amir, together with complete authority in the Khaibar and Mishni Passes, and over the independent tribesmen who occupied them. For the negotiations leading to the treaty, cf. Ghose, op. cit., 52-4. Lord Lytton was not favourably inclined to Yakub Khan, but was persuaded to accept him by Sindhia who argued that unless this was done public opinion in India would be greatly shocked (ibid, 52).
39. For a detailed account of the subsequent incidents and the renewed campaigns in Afghanistan, cf. Hannah, Vol. III and Hensman.
40. According to Hensman (pp. 50-51). The date is given as 10th October, in *PHE*, XII. 310, and 7th October in *CHI*. VI. 420.
40a. *THG*, 522-3; *Life of Sir MacGregor*, II. 140; Hensman, 134.
40b. *THG*, 522-3.
41. Balfour, 398. Ghose, op cit., 71.
42 Quoted in *PHE*, XII. 309. For a critical account of this episode, cf Ghose, op cit., 71-8.
43 "The departure of the Amir and his ministers was followed by a general rising of the tribes round Kabul" (Balfour, 388).
44. Balfour, 396-7.
45 Tytler, 149; *CHI*, VI. 420; *PHE*, XII. 310-11.
46. *The Life of Abdur Rahman*, II. 173; quoted in *PHE*, XII. 313.
47. *CHI*. VI. 121-22. *THG* quotes evidence of Abdur Rahman's successful intervention (p. 524 f.n. 2.).
48. *PHE*, XII. 313.
49. CHI, VI 421.
50. *PHE*, XII. 312
51. Davies, p. 157.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE THIRD BURMESE WAR AND THE ANNEXATION OF BURMA

Things remained quiet in Burma after the annexation of Pegu[1] and cordial relations were established between Burma and India. A commercial treaty was concluded by Col. Phayre in 1862, offering facilities to traders of both countries. It opened up British trade with China through Burma, by authorizing British steamers to proceed up the Irawadi and the British merchants to settle in any part of the Burmese territory.[2] Phayre rightly claimed, and the Government of India agreed, that the treaty was highly favourable to British interests. Further advantages were secured by another commercial treaty in 1867. By this treaty the King of Burma surrendered his right of monopoly in all articles except earth-oil, timber and precious stones. It also authorized the British Government to establish a Resident or Political Agent in Burmese territory invested with full and final jurisdiction over all civil suits between British subjects in the Burmese capital. Cases between British and Burmese subjects were to be decided by him in co-operation with a Burmese officer. There is hardly any doubt that this treaty, which the Burmese had to execute under pressure, was the thin end of the wedge by which the British octopus was extending its stranglehold over the hapless state of Burma. The King of Burma was gradually induced, or rather forced under pressure, to agree to the surrender of frontier dues and abolition of monopolies, the establishment of a new Political Military Agency at Bhamo far to the north, and conveyance by British steamers of traffic between Yunnan and Rangoon hitherto carried on by Chinese caravans. All these slowly but surely crippled his political power and financial resources, and may be regarded as the precursors of the further expansion and consolidation of British authority in Burma. It was foreshadowed by the plan to construct a railway from Rangoon to Prome and also to build such steamers as could rapidly convey large armies from Prome to Mandalay. Indeed the cry for annexation of Upper Burma was already raised by British merchants and officials.[3] A British expedition was sent in 1868 to explore the route from Bhamo to Western China.[4] Although it appears from official accounts that the King of Burma rendered all possible assistance to it,

the *Rangoon Gazette* accused him of 'behaving in an underhand manner' and threatened him with the annexation of his country.[5]

While the general tendency of the British settlers and officials in Burma was to extend their authority, the Burmese Government also gave causes of friction. Even the experience of the last two wars had not taught them to forego their sense of dignity and etiquette which had become an anachronism in the civilized world, and prudence, foresight and forbearance were not certainly among the characteristic virtues of their Kings and officials. The result was a series of disputes regarding the authority over the Eastern and Western Karen States, the judicial powers vested in the Political Agent by the treaty of 1867, extradition and domicile of British subjects, the failure of the Burmese Government to punish their subjects who committed robberies in British territory, revival of the monopoly system by the King, etc. Lastly came the shoe-question. In pursuance of the Burmese etiquette the British officers, including the Chief Commissioners, had to take off shoes before they were interviewed by the King. In 1876 the Governor-General of India decided not to yield to this humiliating procedure. Both sides were adamant, and a characteristic remark is attributed to the King of Burma that he would fight for 'shoe' though he had not fought for Pegu.[6] Thus the Political Agent was no longer received by the King.

In the meantime the King of Burma sought to establish contact with other European powers. A Burmese mission visited Paris and concluded a commercial treaty in 1873.[7] But the French agent who came to Mandalay to obtain ratification of the new treaty suggested some additional clauses which would oblige the French Government to use its good offices on behalf of Burma and send military officers to train the Burmese army. Due to the intercession of the British, and in order to avoid offending them, the French refused to ratify either the original or the supplementary treaty.[8] The King of Burma also concluded a treaty with Italy, but here again the British Government intervened, and the clause regarding the importation of arms and ammunition was considerably modified in order to make it innocuous for all practical purposes.[9] The King of Burma also sent an envoy to Persia, but a proposed mission to Russia had to be abandoned on account of her unwillingness to receive it.[10] The King of Burma wanted to carry on diplomatic relations directly with the Queen of England as he regarded it as beneath his dignity to treat on equal terms with the Governor-General of India, who was a mere official.[11] But in this he was not successful. Beyond these efforts to establish contact with foreign powers which bore little

fruit, and an attempt to cast guns and construct vessels in his own country with the help of European adventurers,[12] Mindon did not do anything which might disturb his relations with the British.

In 1878 King Mindon died and was succeeded by Thibaw, a youth of twenty. It coincided with the period when, under Lord Lytton, the 'Forward Policy' was ascendant in British relations with neighbouring States, as has already been noticed in the case of Afghanistan.[13] So, advantage was taken of the accession of a new king to press the usual grievances and attempt to wring out new concessions. As usual, the maltreatment of British subjects formed the chief complaint. These were partly redressed, but the objection to taking off shoes was overruled.

About this time news reached the Government of India that the new King had executed on February 15-17, 1879, about eighty members of the royal family including "the late king's sons, with mothers, wives and children".[14] A vivid and detailed account of the horrible massacre, with all its attendant cruelties, is given in the diary of the British Resident at Mandalay, but while there is no doubt about the execution, the details must be accepted with caution, as we have no version of the other side, and independent corroborative evidence is lacking. Under instructions of Lord Lytton the Resident delivered "forcible remonstrance against these barbarities" and threatened to leave the capital. The remonstrance had little effect upon the ministers who took their stand upon the sovereign authority of Burma, and justified their action by reasons of State.[15] But it gave the imperialist jingos a good handle, and loud cry was raised for the annexation of Burma by its European residents. It was inevitable that in such a strained atmosphere, incident would happen disturbing the normal relations between the British and the Burmese, giving rise to charges and counter-charges.

The Government of India, however, did not respond to this cry, nor were they moved by the reported grievances of British subjects and later massacres by the King of Burma, to take any hostile step. For the Secretary of State had turned down the Governor-General's suggestion, that advantage should be taken of the old grievances to wring concessions from the new King, and held the view that nothing he had done so far called for any change of policy. But on the death of R. B. Shaw, the British Resident in Upper Burma, on 15 June, 1879, the Chief Commissioner of Lower Burma recommended that "no successor to Mr. Shaw should be appointed unless and until we receive from the Burmese Government satisfactory assurances of a change of attitude on their part and of their consent to a revision of our general relations with them." Col. H. A. Browne,

who temporarily took up the duties of the Residency, left Mandalay in August, 1879, and the staff of the Residency with all American and English residents of Mandalay left the city on October 6.[16]

The Government of India were insistent on the cancellation of all treaties with Burma on the plea of acts of violence to which British subjects were victims. Two illustrative cases will suffice. On November 13, 1879, the crew of a British steamer were assaulted by some Burmese. The Burmese magistrate imposed a fine of Rs. 100/- and some punishments on two coolies. On May 27 and 28, the British Mail steamer *'Yunan'* was alleged to have been forcibly detained. On complaint being made, the Burmese Foreign Minister challenged the accuracy of the fact alleged, but dismissed the Governor in whose jurisdiction the incident had occurred, and took steps to prevent any such incident. On both these occasions the Government of India, being dissatisfied with the action of the Burmese Government, requested the Secretary of State to authorize the cancellation of the existing treaties. The spirit of *"Delenda est Carthago"* was not dead even after two thousand years! But the Secretary of State did not think either of the two incidents mentioned above as of sufficient gravity to justify cancellation of treaties. It must be remembered that this was in 1881 when the Liberal Ministry of Gladstone had supplanted Disraeli's Government, and the 'Forward Policy' had suffered a serious reverse in Afghanistan and by the resignation of Lord Lytton as Viceroy.

All the while, the tension between the two Governments increased over the question of monopoly exercised by the king of Burma. It was injurious to British trade, but even the Chief Commissioner doubted very much whether it could be regarded as an infringement of the treaty of 1867. Nevertheless, strong pressure brought by the mercantile community of British Burma induced the Government of India to make a strong remonstrance, describing the exercise of the right of monopoly by the King of Burma as an unfriendly act. As a result of this the King abolished all monopolies on February 16, 1882, and sent an envoy who reached Simla on April 30, 1882, but no agreement could be reached.[17]

In the meantime Thibaw pursued his father's policy of seeking allies in Europe. A mission was sent to Paris in 1883 to renew the commercial treaty of 1873 which had not been ratified. By this time France had established her influence in Cochin-China and Tonkin and was believed to have an eye on Upper Burma. So England was naturally jealous of any alliance between Burma and France. She represented to France that as she had special and predominant

interest in Burma, she entertained serious objections to any special alliance or political understanding between Burma and any other power. France however assured England that the proposed treaty would be of a purely commercial character.

A Franco-Burmese treaty was concluded on January 15, 1885, and ratified in November next. Though the British could not point out anything objectionable in the treaty, they felt that Burma sought alliance with France with the real and ultimate object of emancipating herself from the special influence and control of British India. Such a conviction was bad enough, but it was rendered worse by alarming reports such as the concession of ruby mines in Upper Burma to a French Company, reduction of import duty on French goods, construction of a railway line in Upper Burma, and founding a bank at Mandalay. Most of these were unfounded and none proceeded beyond the initial stage of planning, and the French Government denied them. Yet the very prospect of having to face French rivalry in the economic exploitation of Upper Burma, which had hitherto been a close preserve of Britain, created great indignation among the British commercial classes. The Rangoon Chamber of Commerce and the Irawady Flotilla Company passed resolution after resolution demanding annexation of Upper Burma. The British commercial circle was also perturbed and requested the Secretary of State to re-establish a British Resident and a mixed Court of Justice at Mandalay and to secure facility for freedom of commerce.

The rumours about concessions to France and the importunities of the British commercial circles gradually brought about a change in the attitude of the Home Government, and it came round to the view that political and commercial dominance of France in Burma must be prevented at any cost, even at the risk of hostilities with the Burmese King. The British Prime Minister reminded the French Government that Her Majesty's Government could not view with indifference "the establishment of any preponderating influence in Burmah other than that of the Indian Government".[18] The mercantile community in Britain now fell in line with the views expressed in India. The London Chamber of Commerce requested the Secretary of State "either to annex the whole of Native Burmah, or to assume a protectorate over that country by the appointment of a sovereign under British control".[19] Those who knew the influence of commerce upon British politics could not doubt for a moment that the fate of Burma was sealed.

The political relations between Burma and the British in 1885 were thus very similar to those which led to the Second Burmese War in 1852, and, as on the previous occasion, incidents happened

at the opportune moment which could be made to serve as pretexts for an open rupture. But these were, in both cases, mere excuses, and not the real causes of the war that followed, and so need not be elaborated in detail.

There was a long-standing dispute between the Governments of India and Burma regarding the boundary line between Burma and Manipur. The Burmese Government did not accept the boundary line fixed by a British Commission in 1881 and requested the Government of India, in 1884, to remove the boundary pillars put up by them, failing which they would be destroyed by them. The Maharaja of Manipur was authorized by the Government of India to resist Burmese troops if they destroyed the pillars. But the Burmese did not push the matter further.

The incident which precipitated the war was the fine inflicted by the Government of Burma on the Bombay-Burma Trading Corporation. This Company took the lease of Ningyan forests for cutting timbers, a fixed amount being paid per log. It was reported to the King of Burma that the Company had deprived him of his just revenue by having paid a bribe of Rs. 60,000 to the Governor of Ningyan. A regular trial was held and some foresters employed by the Company gave evidence against them and supported the charge. Ultimately on August 12, 1885, the Government of Burma decided that the Company had defrauded the King to the extent of ten lakhs of Rupees by taking away 56,702 logs without entering them in the books. They proposed at first to cancel the lease, but later imposed a fine of Rs. 23,59,066 in four equal instalments. The London agent of the Company approached the Secretary of State; so high politics gathered round the simple matter of a civil dispute. The Chief Commissioner wrote to the Burmese Foreign Minister on August 28, 1885, asking him whether he was prepared to suspend the decree against the Corporation and refer the matter to an arbitrator to be appointed by the Viceroy. Three days later he sent a telegram to the Foreign Minister not to press the Corporation for payment, and held out the threat that otherwise "serious consequences might arise", if the case was summarily dealt with. In reply to the letter dated 28 August, the Burmese Foreign Minister reiterated that the charges against the Corporation were true and refused to suspend the decree or accept an arbitrator. In reply the Chief Commissioner, in his letter dated 22 October, demanded that (1) an envoy from the Viceroy should be suitably received at Mandalay and the case of the Corporation should be settled in communication with him; (2) no action shall be taken against the Corporation till the arrival of the envoy; (3) in future an envoy from the Viceroy

should reside at Mandalay; (4) the Burmese Government should regulate his relations with foreign powers in accordance with the advice of the Viceroy; and (5) complete facilities should be afforded for British trade with China. The first three demands were to be accepted before November 10, without any further discussion.[20]

The Burmese reply was received on November 9. The Burmese Government defended the judgment passed in the case of the Corporation, but nevertheless, being desirous of assisting foreign merchants, agreed to review it if the Corporation presented a petition to the King. They also accepted demands Nos. 3 and 5. As regards the fourth demand they were prepared to refer to the arbitration of France, Germany and Italy, who were friends of both Governments, the propriety of such demand being made by one independent State of another.[21]

The British Government had begun military preparations immediately after sending the ultimatum, and as soon as the reply was received, ordered General Prendergast to advance upon Mandalay (November 13). King Thibaw also did not wait for the reply to his letter and issued a proclamation asking his people to fight for national honour. There was, however, scarcely any fight. The British army advanced practically without opposition, and King Thibaw and his army surrendered at Mandalay on November 28. On January 1, 1886, Lord Dufferin, the Viceroy, issued a proclamation annexing Upper Burma to the British dominions.

The prevailing feeling among Englishmen was reflected in the following statement of Lord Randolph Churchill: "The arrogance and barbarity of a Native Court, the oppression of British subjects, the hindrance to British commerce, the intrigues of foreign nations, are for ever terminated in Upper Burma."[22]

Any one who carefully reads the above narrative would perhaps carry the impression that while the last two were the real grounds for annexation, the first two were more or less pretexts for the same and hardly justify it. The cruelty and barbarity of the Burmese Government must be denounced in the strongest possible language, but cannot under the accepted principles of international law, be regarded as a cause for annexation. The oppression of British subjects in Burma was undoubtedly much exaggerated, and the available evidence shows that the Government of Burma never refused to make such amends as an independent State could be expected to do. As regards the hindrance to British commerce, it is not justified by facts unless the British wanted monopoly of trade to the exclusion of others. As regards the intrigues of the French, it is difficult to determine their exact nature. The gravamen of the

British charge was the existence of a secret arrangement by which France permitted Burma to import arms through Tonkin. This was officially denied by the French Government and the truth of the allegation cannot be said to be above all doubts. But assuming every allegation to be true, France did not attempt to do anything more than what the British did, and the Burmese Government had not thereby infringed any treaty stipulation with the British or violated any principles of international law.

It would be an insult to the understanding of an average man to argue at length in order to demonstrate that the British attitude to Burma was opposed to all known conventions, principles, and procedure, which regulate the relation between civilized States in modern age. The real explanation of the conduct of the British has been furnished by one of their great legal luminaries. Sir James Stephen refused to put the smaller Asiatic States, including Afghanistan and Native States of India, in the same class as civilized States of the West. His frank statement on the policy to be pursued towards the former furnishes the true basis of the imperial policy pursued by the British. Referring to these States he says: "They occupy a distinctly inferior position—their inferiority consisting mainly in this that they are not to be permitted to follow a course of policy which exposes us to danger. This is the footing on which every State enclosed in the British Dominions is practically treated..... at bottom our relations with all of them (Sindhia, Kabul (amir), Holkar, Nizam) stand on the same basis. They are all determined by the fact that we are exceedingly powerful and highly civilized, and that they are comparatively weak and half barbarous".[23]

The words are brutally frank and truly reflect the inner principles dominating imperialist outlook of the West almost throughout the nineteenth century. They are writ large on the history of British relations with Indian States and neighbouring countries. The three wars by which the whole of Burma was added piecemeal to British dominions, and which mark the beginning and end of British annexations in India during the period covered by this volume, merely illustrate the active, though often unconscious, application of the principle enunciated by Sir James Stephen. A critical or philosophical discussion of the principle is, however, outside the scope of this work.

British statesmen and historians have emphasized the barbarous cruelties of the Burmese king, presumably in justification of their aggressive policy. The stories rest mainly upon the evidence of the British who were interested in painting the Burmese ruler in the blackest hue. But even admitting that the facts are substan-

tially true, they can hardly justify the course of action pursued, even if the British were really inspired by humanitarian motive. The case of Burma proves, what has been illustrated again and again in the history of European colonialism in Asia, that humanity and trade interest form a powerful but very unholy combination in aid of aggressive imperialism.

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1. See p. 126.
2. A. C Banerjee, *Annexation of Burma*, 178-9
3. Ibid, 198.
4. Ibid, 202.
5. Ibid, 208-9.
6. Ibid, 233.
7. Ibid, 235.
8. Ibid, 238.
9. Ibid, 239-40.
10. Ibid, 240.
11. Ibid, 241.
12. Ibid, 243.
13. Cf. Chapter XXV.
14. Banerjee, op cit., 249, 252.
15. *CHI*, VI. 436.
16. Banerjee, op. cit., 255-6.
17. Ibid, 272, 277.
18. Ibid, 306-7.
19. Ibid, 309.
20. Ibid, 310.
21. Ibid, 311-12.
22. Ibid, 315.
23. W. J. Eastwick, *Lord Lytton and the Afghan War* (2nd edition, 1879), pp. 6-7.

CHAPTER XXVII*

WAR AGAINST MANIPUR

It has been mentioned above,[1] how, as a result of the First Burmese War, the State of Manipur was made independent of Burma, and Gambhir Singh, who played an important role in that war, became its first independent king. Gambhir Singh's son, Chandrakirtti ascended the throne in A.D. 1834, on his father's death, but as he was only two years old the real authority was exercised by Nar Singh as regent. Nar Singh subsequently usurped the throne and ruled for fourteen years, but, after his death in 1850, Chandrakirtti recovered the throne and ruled till his death in 1886. He had ten sons born of his six queens and distributed the different offices among them before his death. In accordance with his wishes his four sons, Sura-chandra, Kula-chandra (or Kuladhwaja-chandra), Tikendrajit and Jhala-kirtti, born of the first four queens in order of seniority, became, after his death, respectively Maharaja (King), Jubraj (Heir Apparent), Senanayak (Commander) and Senapati (Commander-in-Chief). Jhala-kirtti died within a few months and Tikendrajit succeeded to his office of Senapati. Of the three uterine brothers of the Maharaja, Bhairabjit held the offices of Pucca Sena (Lieutenant-General) and Shagol Hanjaba (Commander of the Horse), and the other two, Kesarjit and Padmalochan, *alias* Gopal Sena, were in charge, respectively, of elephants and doollies (vehicles carried by men on their shoulders). Prince Angao Sena, son of the fifth queen, was officer-in-charge of roads, and Zilla Singh or Zilla Gumba, son of the sixth queen, was very young and acted as an A.D.C. to the king.[2]

The new king Sura-chandra had to face a sea of troubles. There were no less than three rebellions in course of a little more than a year, and the Kukis also created troubles. The King himself was a peace-loving man, but Tikendrajit, who had already during his father's reign distinguished himself by his prowess and military skill, suppressed all the risings, occasionally with British help. All this made Tikendrajit the most powerful and prominent member of the court, and he offered a refreshing contrast to his elder brother, the King, who was weak and vacillating. On the other hand, while the King was mild and benevolent, Tikendrajit was somewhat proud,

* This Chapter was originally published in the *Bengal Past and Present*, Vol. LXXVIII, Part I serial No. 145 (pp. 1-29 Jan.-June 1959,). For abbreviations used in the footnotes of this Chapter, cf. Bibliography to this Chapter.

haughty, and arrogant. Nevertheless, Tikendrajit and the King were both very popular.

There was not much love lost between the brothers and this was highlighted by the open rivalry, almost animosity, between Tikendrajit and Bhairabjit, generally referred to as Pucca Sena Bhairab was an able and, comparatively speaking, educated man. But he was mean and jealous, according to all contemporary evidence, and was never liked by the people of Manipur. Even the Maharaja asked Tikendrajit to forgive his many misdeeds.[3] He was the sworn enemy of Tikendrajit since the day when the latter, as Senapati, became his superior officer. There were frequent dissensions between the two on petty matters, but the ill feeling rose to its height when both asked for the hands of a girl, supposed to be the prettiest maid in Manipur. The King at first remained neutral and held the balance between the two, but was gradually won over by Pucca Sena. A glaring instance of this was furnished by the creation of a new judicial post to which Pucca Sena was appointed, though the whole department of administration of justice was hitherto in charge of Jubraj. Gradually the brothers were split into two factions. The King and his three uterine brothers formed one group, and the other step-brothers rallied round Tikendrajit.[4]

The popularity and ability of Tikendrajit drew upon him the wrath of the British Political Agent at Manipur who, in 1888, prepared a list of his crimes, some of which were committed as far back as 1877 and 1881. The most serious among them was beating of several persons, including a woman, at different times, for what he considered, rightly or wrongly, as offences against his person and honour. On receiving the report of these crimes the Government of India advised the Maharaja to banish Tikendrajit. The Maharaja issued the order but later withdrew it, ostensibly on the ground that there was already a great commotion in the State over the slaughter of a cow. The Political Agent protested, but the Government of India acquiesced in the withdrawal[5]

Everything in this episode is curious and hardly complimentary to the British. Their interference in such petty personal matters of a foreign State—whatever may be its power—is not sanctioned either by law or reason, but can only be explained by the logic of the strong towards the weak. But even such logic can hardly be invoked in support of the penalty of banishment for offences which were not infrequently committed by the British officers and civilians, particularly tea-planters, in India, almost always with impunity, and rarely at the cost of a few rupees by way of fine. Lastly, if the acquiescence in withdrawal was right, the original order was wrong,

and vice versa. The incident is, however, worth noting as an evidence of the strong prejudices of the British Government against Tikendrajit, although he seems to have been very much liked by the Political Agent, Mr. Grimwood.[6]

The dissensions between the two rival factions of royal brothers culminated in a palace revolution. The immediate occasion seems to be the humiliation inflicted upon Angao Sena and Zilla Gumba by the King at the instance of Pucca Sena. The two first-named lost some of their offices, rights and privileges and had good reason to fear that they would be either banished or otherwise punished. This goaded them to rebellion.[7] So, at midnight, on September 21, 1890, Angao Sena and Zilla Gumba, accompanied by a number of attendants, scaled the walls of the zenana mahal with the help of a ladder, and proceeded towards the bed-chamber of king Sura-chandra, who immediately fled to the Residency Building. Tikendrajit was not present at the time of this occurrence,[8] but joined his two step-brothers shortly afterwards and the whole palace was occupied without any bloodshed. For reasons, not definitely known, Jubraj Kula-chandra had left the palace that very night, but returned in the morning and was proclamied King.

In the meantime the ex-King had found shelter in the Residency along with his brothers, ministers, and a number of armed retainers. The conduct and attitude of the ex-King Sura-chandra as well as of the Political Agent, Mr. Grimwood, from this moment onward, has been the subject of dispute and a matter of keen controversy. It is not easy to disentangle the truth from their conflicting versions of what actually took place on that eventful day.[9] According to Sura-chandra, his brothers, ministers, and other officers met him at the Residency at the dawn of 22 September, "with about 2,000 men, of whom about four or six hundred were properly armed." He asked for the Political Agent's assistance and sanction to fight with the rebels at once. But the Political Agent told him that he should not be allowed to fight until the orders of the Chief Commissioner (of Assam) were received. On the other hand, he (Grimwood) ordered the British sepoys to seize the arms of the Manipuri troops, and as soon as this was done, "ordered the (Manipuri) troops to disband and return to their homes, which, disheartened and humiliated, they did".

Grimwood's version is that the Manipuri troops, who came to the Residency on the dawn of 22 September, were not 2,000, but "may have been 400 at the outside, of whom 40 or 50, certainly not more, were armed." "The Maharaja never asked me for sanction to fight." The Maharaja had no wish to fight, and his troops had

the whole day to fight, if they wished to, as the disarming took place late in the afternoon. Grimwood justifies the disarming on the ground that it was considered necessary for the protection of the Residency during the night, and then adds: "If I recollect right, there were about 30 guns altogether. While the guns were being collected, the Maharaja objected, and I at once gave them all back on the condition that the armed men went into one of the villages near by, which they did." The following statement of Mr. Grimwood traces the course of events: "In the evening I received a telegram from the Chief Commissioner directing me to try and mediate between the parties, and also saying that 200 rifles from Kohima were ready to march here if I wanted. I then sent word to the palace that I would come and see the Senapati next morning and decided not to ask for the troops from Kohima till after the interview with the Senapati". But nothing came out of all this, for, Grimwood continues: "On the next morning (Tuesday) the Maharaja told me he had fully made up his mind to leave the country and go on a pilgrimage and settle at Brindaban".

This statement is of special importance as it enables us to test the truth of Mrs. Grimwood's account as well as of the official version of the Government of India. Mrs. Grimwood says: "My husband brought every argument to bear upon the Raja to induce him to brave the matters out, and allow some efforts to be made to regain his throne; but he would not listen to any reason, and after some hours spent in fear and terror.. . ...signified his intention to my husband of making a formal abdication of the throne".[10] This is out-Heroding Herod, for even Grimwood makes no such claim. As a matter of fact, he himself wired to the Chief Commissioner on the 22nd morning that "Maharaja and brothers are preparing to attack Senapati if they can collect men".[11] It is significant that even with this knowledge he did not ask the troops of Kohima to march, nor evidently informed the Maharaja that he could count upon their help. Neither of these would have adversely affected his proposed negotiations with the Senapati, which he offers as an excuse. On the other hand, the march of British troops from Kohima would have surely enhanced the chance of a successful negotiation with the rebels, and a knowledge of it would probably have induced the King not to abdicate.

The statement of Grimwood, quoted above, is hardly compatible with the following account of the Government of India:

"Shortly after daybreak the Langthobal detachment joined the Residency escort, and the Political Agent opened communications with Tikendrajit. The latter was asked to come to the Residency, but declined to do so while the Maharaja was there, saying he was afraid. Mr. Grimwood then wrote urging him to reinstate the Maha-

raja and promising to enquire into his disputes with the Pucca Sena; but apparently no answer was received".[13]

On a perusal of all the avaliable evidence, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the ex-Maharaja Sura-chandra certainly wanted to fight out for his throne, but was positively discouraged by the attitude of the Political Agent, Mr. Grimwood, who, in this instance, followed a policy which was at variance with not only what was expected of him in his position, but also the view of the Chief Commissioner implied in his telegram about the Kohima troops. His conduct was justly censured by the Government of India.

There is no doubt that being disappointed at not receiving any help from the Political Agent, the ex-Maharaja Sura-chandra told Grimwood that he had decided to retire to Brindaban. Grimwood himself says: "I told him I would arrange it to be so, if he had really made up his mind, but he must understand he could never return to Manipur, Cachar, or Sylhet, and I also said that the Pucca Sena must go with him, but the others might stay or not as they liked".

Mrs. Grimwood says (in continuation of the passage quoted above): "My husband was anxious to get him to reconsider his hasty resolve to abandon his throne; but fear of the Senapati overcame all other sensations.....my husband finding every argument of no avail, began to make the necessary arrangements for his highness's departure". This is hardly borne out by Grimwood's own statement quoted above, or the version of the Government of India which merely states that he advised the ex-Maharaja to re-occupy the throne for a few days, if he were determined to leave. There are, however, two significant steps which Grimwood should have taken but omitted to take, by way of inducing the ex-Maharaja to reconsider his decision. He should have first assured the ex-Maharaja that the Chief Commissioner had placed the troops at Kohima at his disposal in order to help him, and then held the proposed interview with the Senapati on the 23rd morning. He did neither. It may be mentioned that he had told the Maharaja, when he asked for help, that with the men at his disposal he could not take the offensive. The hollowness of this excuse is exposed by his refusal to send for the Kohima troops. Then, knowing full well that the recognition of Maharaja Sura-chandra as the king of Manipur by the Government of India gave him full authority in speaking on his behalf, he did not intercede, on his behalf, in any way, nor even asked for an explanation of their conduct from the rebels. The Government of India expressed the following view, which appears to be quite just and reasonable:—

"We consider that in his conduct of this affair the Political Agent showed some want of judgment. He should have exerted his influence more strongly to uphold the authority of the Maharaja; and he should not have accepted the Maharaja's abdication, and allowed him to leave the State, without reference to the Government of India, by whom Sura-chandra had been recognized as chief of Manipur. A Political officer has no power to accept the abdication of a Native Chief. Mr. Grimwood's action greatly prejudiced the case, and was the cause of much subsequent trouble".

On the whole, judging all the circumstances, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Grimwood, for some reason or other, was sympathetic to the new régime and unwilling to see Sura-chandra restored to the throne. The latter seems to insinuate that this was due to Grimwood's friendship for Tikendrajit.[14] Captain Hearsey holds Mr. Grimwood principally responsible for the palace revolution of 21 September. He alleges that Grimwood used to take photographs of nude girls and women of Manipur and debauched many of them. Complaints of his conduct having reached Maharaja Sura-chandra, the latter took Grimwood to task, and unpleasant correspondence followed. This enraged Grimwood who sent unfavourable reports about the Maharaja during 1889 and 1890 to the Chief Commissioner and Viceroy, strongly reccomending his removal. There is no authentic evidence of all this, but the conduct of Grimwood and the reference to the Muslim photographer by the Maharaja lend strength to the allegations of Hearsey, a contemporary military officer.[15]

The ex-king Sura-chandra had finally made up his mind to go to Brindaban, a holy place near Mathura in U.P., and actually wrote a letter to this effect to Tikendrajit. In this letter he informed the latter that he had no desire to contest the throne, and in accordance with this decision returned the royal dress and sword, etc., asking in exchange that arrangement should be made for his journey.[16] Tikendrajit's reply shows that he, like Grimwood, construed it as an abdication, and made satisfactory arrangement for Sura-chandra's journey to Brindaban.[17] It appears that Grimwood himself visited Tikendrajit in his palace, with Sura-chandra's letter or shortly after it was sent, and got his promise to arrange for Maharaja's journey.[18] Sura-chandra, however, asserted, as soon as he reached Silchar on 3 October, that he did not abdicate, that Grimwood must have misunderstood him, and that it was only after reaching Silchar that he discovered from the Political Agent's Pass that he was said to have abdicated. He wired to the Government of India to this effect on 6 October. In his Memorial to the Government of India, dated 14 November, he said that his so-called letter of abdication was merely a ruse to get out of Manipur, because the roads were blocked by rebels and the Political Agent advised him to go to Kohima.[19]

It is true that, technically speaking, King Sura-chandra had not formally abdicated the throne. There is, however, no doubt that his letter bears this interpretation and, what is more important, he intended that it should be interpreted as such, as the word 'ruse' indicates. It is clear, therefore, that either he at first really intended to abdicate and later changed his mind, or played a very dirty trick for getting out of Manipur.

The departure of the ex-Maharaja Sura-chandra from Manipur made the palace revolution completely successful without any bloodshed. It was held later by the Government that Tikendrajit was the prime mover of this revolution. But there are certain facts which are usually ignored in this connection. In the first place, Tikendrajit did not accompany his two step-brothers when they attacked the palace, and the Political Agent, Mr. Grimwood, makes no reference to him in his first report of the revolt. Secondly, Tikendrajit did not occupy the throne as he easily could, particularly as Kula-chandra was not present in Manipur Tikendrajit very rightly emphasized this point in his statement before the court: "It is the custom of the Manipur Raj family, more than perhaps of any of all the royal families of the world, that the victorious party occupies the throne and wears the crown, but neither the defendant (i.e. Tikendrajit himself) nor the other two princes attempted to overstep the eldest of them, and it was resolved to ask the Jubraj (i.e. Kula-chandra) to preside. But he was nowhere to be found during the night".[20] Kula-chandra was evidently aware of the coming revolution and decided to sit on the fence without compromising himself in any way, so that if the revolution failed, he could claim innocence of the whole affair. The two brothers who staged the revolution were attached to Tikendrajit, and he could easily declare himself king as the army was under his command, he was very popular, and there was nobody to oppose his claim. He showed a rare magnanimity in waiting for his absent elder brother to return and crown himself king.

In view of the subsequent events, and the constitutional position claimed by the ruler of Manipur as well as the Government of India, it is necessary to find out the exact circumstances attending the change of the Government at Manipur. The account of the Government of India runs as follows:—

"After the Maharaja's departure, the Ministers who had accompanied him to the Residency returned to the Palace, where they were well received by Kula-chandra, the Jubraj, who had meanwhile come back to Manipur and proclaimed himself Maharaja. On the 29th September, Kulachandra despatched letters to the Government of India, announcing that he had ascended the Manipur *gadi* in consequence of his elder brother's abdication and asking for the Viceroy's favour".[21]

It is not quite clear from the above whether Kula-chandra asked for formal sanction or approval of the new Government in Manipur by the Government of India. In his statement to the court Tikendrajit said that on 23 September he had sent telegram to the Chief Commissioner of Assam "soliciting permission to install the Jubraj Kulachandra on the *Gaddi*".[22] But as will be shown later, the English translation of his Bengali statement was very defective, and in some places substantially modified the ideas of the original; it is not, therefore, safe to rely on the words "soliciting permission". It is significant that Kula-chandra proclaimed himself 'Maharaja' even before he sent any intimation to the Government of India. But it is equally significant that the Chief Commissioner, in reply to the telegrams from Manipur, recognized Kula-chandra as Regent and not Maharaja, though he accepted the other changes in various offices, namely, Tikendrajit as Jubraj, Angao Sena as Senapati, and Zilla Gumba as Superintendent of the State elephants. The Government of India "declined to pass orders regarding the succession or to acknowledge the letters received from Kula-chandra whom the Chief Commissioner of Assam had recognized as Regent pending the orders of Government".[23]

For the time being everything went on well. The new administration of Manipur, free from internecine quarrel, brought peace and prosperity which the country had not known for some time past. Mrs. Grimwood testifies to the improvements effected by the new Government within a few months.[24] But some amount of disquiet was created by the ominous silence of the Government of India regarding its attitude to the new Government of Manipur.

It is interesting to note in this connection that Grimwood himself did not take the palace revolution seriously; he observed that "Manipur has witnessed many palace revolutions—that of 1890 is merely a repetition".[25]

Though the people of Manipur accepted, without demur, the new régime set up by the revolution of 22 September, 1890, the exiled Maharaja Sura-chandra did not give up all hope for recovering his kingdom. As soon as he reached the British border, he telegraphed to the Viceroy asking for help. A few days later he telegraphed again repudiating his so-called abdication which, he said, was the result of a misunderstanding. He arrived at Calcutta on 12 October, and on 14 November submitted a detailed statement to the Viceroy. As this differed substantially from the official version of Mr. Grimwood, the Political Agent at Manipur, and càst aspersions on his conduct, it was sent to that gentleman who made detailed comment on the observations made by the Maharaja. The

differences between the two versions were of a vital nature and have been referred to above.[26]

The Political Agent, as might be expected, was definitely against the restoration of Sura-chandra. He held the view that the ex-Maharaja could not recover the throne and maintain it without the help of a sufficient number of British troops, and as the eight brothers could no longer live together in peace. it would be necessary to remove Kula-chandra and Tikendrajit from Manipur.[27] The Chief Commisisoner also took the view that the Maharaja could be maintained on the *gadi* only with the help of British troops.[28] It was not till January, 1891, that the Government of India received these views, but they were not favourably impressed and were rather inclined to restore Sura-chandra and remove the rebels from Manipur. In view of the difference of opinion between the Government of India on the one hand, and the Chief Commissioner and the Political Agent on the other, there was a prolonged correspondence[29] between these three, extending over more than a month. At last, after an interview between Lord Lansdowne, the Viceroy, and Mr. Quinton, the Chief Commissioner, towards the end of February, the Government of India arrived at the following decision: Kula-chandra was to be recognized as the Maharaja of Manipur if he agreed to the following conditions, namely, (1) to administer the country according to the advice of the Political Agent; (2) to deport Tikendrajit from Manipur; and (3) to allow the Political Agent to keep 300 soldiers in the Residency.[30] This decision, to say the least of it, is very curious. It accepted the revolution as a *fait accompli* and condoned the person who got the greatest benefit out of it, but banished another who was not known to have taken any actual part in it, but whom they held, without any positive evidence, as its chief instigator.

If the decision was of a dubious character, the procedure followed in carrying it out deserves the strongest condemnation. As an illustration of the imperial arrogance at its worst, and offering an explanation of subsequent events, it deserves a detailed notice.

On 21 February, 1891, the Government of India asked for the opinion of Mr. Quinton as to the best way of arresting Tikendrajit without giving him opportunity to resist the measures by force and also about the condtions to be imposed on Kula-chandra.[31] The Government of India also suggested that the decision about Manipur should be kept a close secret until it was announced by Mr. Quinton personally at Manipur. Quinton was advised to take sufficient force with him even though no resistance was apprehended. Quinton left Calcutta on 21 February, and on 7 March started for Manipur by

the Kohima route, together with four hundred Gurkha soldiers commanded by Col. Skene, and a few civilians. An additional body of 200 Gurkhas were directed to proceed from Cachar to Manipur. It was not till 18 March that Quinton informed the Government of India his views about the conditions to be imposed upon Kula-chandra for recognizing him as Maharaja and intimated that unless he heard anything to the contrary by Saturday (i.e. 21 March) he would treat them as the final decision of the Government of India. He also informed the Government that on his arrival at Manipur he proposed to hold a *durbar* for announcing the decisions of the Government of India and to arrest Tikendrajit in the Durbar Hall.[32] These and other proposals of Mr. Quinton were approved by the Government of India on 19 March. But the Government of India did not realize, as they later remarked, that the *durbar* meant a big open public assembly. They took it to mean a gathering of the Maharaja and his courtiers.[33]

The news of the proposed visit of Quinton caused great consternation to the Manipur Government, as it was generally believed that he was bringing Sura-chandra with him in order to restore him to the throne. It seems the Manipur *durbar* made preparations to meet that eventuality. Mrs. Grimwood writes: "It seemed as though the whole state was on the *qui vive,* to discover any slight clue to the mystery which surrounded the visit of the Chief Commissioner...About ten days before Mr. Quinton arrived we heard for certain that the object of his visit was not the restoration of the ex-Maharajah".[34]

Even Mr. Grimwood, the Political Agent, was as ignorant as the rest, until about March 15 he received a verbal message of Mr. Quinton, conveyed through Mr. Gurdon. It merely informed him of the decision to recognize Kula-chandra as Maharaja and deport Tikendrajit from Manipur. Grimwood "expressed astonishment at these orders", and deprecated the idea of deporting Tikendrajit; he also hinted that this could not be effected without creating trouble. It was not till 21 March when Mr. Quinton was within one day's march from Manipur that he met Mr. Grimwood and disclosed his plan of arresting Tikendrajit at the *durbar,* if he declined to submit voluntarily to the Government Order. Mr. Grimwood, as before, opposed the proposal [35]

Mr. Grimwood's objection was brushed aside by Mr. Quinton who further ordered the former to personally arrest Tikendrajit at the close of the *durbar*.[35a] Accordingly all arrangements were made for the meeting of the *durbar* at 12 noon on March 22, and Maharaja Kula-chandra was asked to attend it with all his brothers.

Mr. Quinton was received with more than due honours. Tongol General and prince Angao Sena met him respectively at six and one day's journey from Manipur. On March 22 he was received by Tikendrajit and a guard of honour, four miles from Manipur. Here the Chief Commissioner dismounted and had some conversation with him at 10 a.m. On that day Mr. Quinton and his escort entered Manipur under the usual salute, the streets being lined by Manipur troops. Outside the main gate of the fort the Chief Commissioner was met by Maharaja Kula-chandra, and, after a little conversation, Mr. Quinton announced that a *durbar* would be held at the Residency on that day at noon and that the Jubraj (i.e. Tikendrajit) and his brothers were required to attend.[36]

The official account, from which the above is quoted, then merely adds that "the necessary orders regarding the parades and guards for the proposed Durbar were issued to the Chief Commissioner's escort".[37] It is discreetly silent about the elaborate military preparations made in and around the *durbar* room of the Residency. A confidential agent of Tikendrajit reported to him that "armed sepoys were placed in front and rear of the Residency Bungalow and that the British Officers were fully equipped and on horse-back".[38] This is corroborated by Mrs. Grimwood who writes: "Precautions were taken to prevent his (Tikendrajit's) escaping. The doors of the durbar room were all locked with the exception of the one by which the princes would enter and guards were stationed in the adjoining rooms, as well as all round the house and in the veranda".[39]

According to the official account "Tikendrajit and his brother Angao Sena went to the Residency to attend the *durbar*, but afterwards went away, and Kula-chandra accounted for their non-attendance on the ground of illness".[40] The statement of Tikendrajit gives the full story. When he reached the Residency he was made to wait in the sun as the Commissioner was not ready at the hour fixed for the *durbar*. Tikendrajit "being on horseback, exposed to the burning sun, became annoyed and disheartened" at this discourteous treatment. Then he noticed the unusual military preparations going on inside, and sent Dasu Sardar to enquire. On receiving his report, mentioned above, Tikendrajit was confirmed in his suspicion that the *durbar* was only a trap to arrest him. "Besides, having been fasting during the previous day and night on account of *Ekadasi* and having undergone the fatigue of going and coming back up to the river to receive the Chief Commissioner in the morning, he felt exhausted and unable to wait longer, and consequently returned to the palace".[41]

As the absence of Tikendrajit at the *durbar* was the pivot round which the tragic happenings at Manipur moved, and the real cause of it has been suppressed in the official version and is not generally known to historians, it is necessary to quote Mrs. Grimwood's account of the incident.

Mrs. Grimwood says that if the princes were not kept waiting at the gate things might have ended very differently. But that delay enabled some of the Manipuri sepoys to gain admission into the Residency grounds, and they "marked the distribution of our forces, saw the Gurkhas lining the entrance-steps and officers in uniform in attendance outside. Some of them even strolled round to the back of the house, and there they saw the same preparations—sepoys on the steps and guards about the grounds". The Manipuris told the Jubraj of all they had seen and he returned to the house with his brother, the Senapati.[42]

According to Mrs. Grimwood the delay in holding the *durbar* was due to the fact that the translation of the order of the Government of India into Manipuri could not be completed in time.[42a] But that does not condone the treatment accorded to the Maharaja and his brothers, who could surely be asked to wait in a room within the Residency.

The following is the Manipur version of what happened after Tikendrajit's departure. "The Maharaja accompanied by Zilla Gumba and the Ministers arrived at the Residency and had to remain standing in the sun below the steps for half an hour. Subsequently when he had remained standing in the verandah for an hour and a half, he wanted to sit, feeling tired. It was then that Mr. Grimwood allowed him to sit in another room".[43]

Such was the reception of the independent ruler of Manipur State in his own capital city. But the worse was yet to come. As soon as the Chief Commissioner came to learn that Tikendrajit was not there, a special messenger was sent to him, but he replied that he was too ill to attend the *durbar*. Thereupon the Chief Commissioner cancelled the *durbar*, and did not even interview the poor King, waiting for three hours to know the orders of the Government of India. After suffering all these humiliations and indignities, the King Kula-chandra returned to his palace, a sadder but wiser man. For, being summoned to the *durbar* next day, 23rd March, at 9 a.m., he did not attend, and sent instead a message to the effect that he would not attend the *durbar* as Tikendrajit was too ill to leave his house.[44]

Mr. Grimwood and Mr. Simpson tried to see Tikendrajit, once on the 22nd afternoon and again on the 23rd morning, but the latter said he was too ill to see them. Then, on the afternoon of the 23rd Grimwood and Simpson saw the Maharaja and communicated to him the decision of the Government of India. According to the Manipur official version the Maharaja thanked the British Government for confirming him as ruler of Manipur. As regards the deportation of Tikendrajit, the Maharaja pointed out that he was already ill, due to his exertions and exhaustions on the 22nd, and his old colic pain had recurred owing to exposure to the sun at the Residency gate. The Maharaja then added: "He was unable to go on account of illness; he would make preparations for leaving Manipur in two or three days".[45]

A contemporary account written by an Indian runs as follows: On hearing the decision of the British Government, the King expressed his inability to arrest Tikendrajit without consulting his ministers. He was given half an hour's time for the purpose and held a council of ministers including Tikendrajit. Tikendrajit himself offered to surrender but the other ministers did not agree to this and wanted to make a further appeal to the Chief Commissioner. Grimwood requested the King to issue a warrant to arrest Tikendrajit, but the King refused. Thereupon Grimwood had an interview with Tikendrajit but failed to persuade him to surrender.[46]

According to Mrs. Grimwood her husband and Simpson saw the Jubraj at four in the afternoon. "He (Mr. Grimwood) said the Jubraj was certainly very unwell...had himself carried down to see them in a litter. The exertion caused him to faint; and my husband said that there was no doubt as to his illness, and that he found him in high fever"[47] Tikendrajit himself states that he told Mr. Grimwood that he was ready to comply with the Government order and wanted a few days' leave for his recovery and preparations. He corroborates the Manipur official version of the *durbar* mentioned above, but says it was held after his interview with Mr. Grimwood, and he repeated at the *durbar* the answer he had given Mr. Grimwood.[48]

The official version of the Government of India is radically different from all the three versions stated above. After referring to the fact that a fresh *durbar* was fixed for 9 a.m. on March 23, it proceeds:

"When the time came it was found that none of the Manipuris were present; and Mr. Grimwood was again sent to the palace, but was unable to obtain an interview with Kulachandra or his brothers. It was then evident that the Senapati was determined not to obey any orders to attend a Durbar, and Mr. Quinton

decided to demand his surrender. At 2 p.m., accompanied by Lieutenant Simpson, Mr. Grimwood went once more to the palace, with a letter to Kulachandra from the Chief Commissioner, intimating that if Tikendrajit was not delivered up, Mr. Quinton would be compelled to have him arrested. Mr. Grimwood saw Kula-chandra; but all attempts at persuasion proved useless, and the Political Agent was forced to return unsuccessful. On his way back to the Residency, Mr. Grimwood saw Tikendrajit, who was brought out of his house in a dooly, but he still refused to attend Durbar. When they arrived at the Residency Mr. Grimwood and Lieutenant Simpson reported that the palace enclosure was full of Manipuri troops, to the number of five to six thousand. Nevertheless, after consulting Colonel Skene and Mr. Grimwood, Mr. Quinton decided that an attempt should be made to arrest the Senapati in his house at day-break on the following day. Col. Skene then summoned the officers of the escort and made his arrangements".[49]

The statement ignores the fact that Tikendrajit was seriously ill on March 23, which is conclusively proved by the statement of Mrs. Grimwood and indirectly supported by the casual reference in the official version that Tikendrajit was brought out in a *dooly*. It does not refer to the reply of either Maharaja Kula-chandra or Tikendrajit beyond using some vague expressions. In view of the real illness of Tikendrajit it is very probable that he must have asked for some time, in any case, before he could leave Manipur. It is significant that the official version does not say positively that either the Maharaja or Tikendrajit refused point-blank to carry out the order of deporting the latter. The Manipur official version, therefore, seems generally acceptable. They asked for time, whatever their ultimate motive might have been. But Mr. Quinton immediately made preparations to arrest, by force and stealth, a man who was seriously ill and might have possibly surrendered in a few days' time.

Mr. Quinton decided to arrest Tikendrajit in his house during the same night by suddenly invading the palace. In order to conceal this design and put Tikendrajit off his guard, requisition was made to the palace for porters to carry the luggage of the Chief Commissioner next morning to Imphal. But this trick did not deceive Tikendrajit who got scent of Quinton's plan and made adequate arrangement for defending his house.

In the early hours of the morning, at about 4-45 a.m., on March 24, the British forces suddenly attacked the house of Tikendrajit. But the Manipuri soldiers gave a good account of themselves, and though some of the British soldiers effected an entrance into the house, they could not seize Tikendrajit, and the British force had to fall back to the Residency. The events are thus described in a petition addressed to the Viceroy by the ladies of the Manipur royal family:

"A body of British troops leaped over the wall in the north-west corner of the *Pat** and attacked Jubraj's house. The Jubraj, considering this a calamity, fled

through a hidden path, and took refuge in the *Pat*. On the other side the sepoys put to death some of the guard people, women, boys, girls, and male and female servants, attacked the temple of the household god, called Brindabanchandra, stole the jewels dedicated to the idol, and having gone up the temple, fired the *Pat*. Another body of troops entered the village lying east of the *Pat*, and put to death Dasu Sardar and his whole family. They burned down 10 or 12 houses adjoining his own. In these houses, idols, cows and boys and girls were killed. They murdered wayfarers—subjects who were frightened and fleeing. It was then that the Jubraj took up arms with a view to save the lives of the excited subjects and specially in self-defence. The fighting having continued the whole day on both sides, many persons were killed and wounded. After nightfall, when the British troops had expended all their ammunition, the fighting ceased on both sides just at the sounding of the British bugle to cease fighting".[51]

This account is supported by the only other contemporary Indian evidence available to us which, however, mentions the stiff resistance offered by the soldiers in the Jubraj's house, although the Jubraj, i.e. Tikendrajit, himself was not present, and may be said technically to have taken no part in it.[52]

The official version[53] makes a very brief reference to this ignoble episode, and agrees with the above account so far as military operations are concerned,[54] but refutes "the allegations regarding cruelty and outrage and the killing of women and children". These are said to have "received the most carful investigation after the occupation of Manipur, and were proved to be false".[55] Little value attaches to such investigations by the party that is charged with the crimes, and at a time when no Manipuri would dare utter a syllable against the British. It is, however, significant that even in the brief account of the campaign the official version refers to "seizing the temple" and "inflicting considerable loss on the enemy". It also admits that the "village to the west of the Residency was promptly burned", and further that "in the heavy firing of the 24th within the fort, three Manipur women are believed to have been killed, though whether by the fire of British troops or by that of Manipuris is not certain".[56]

In spite of the official denial of the charges, which was almost a routine normally followed by the British Government in India, it may be regarded as almost certain that, though the allegations possibly exaggerated actual facts, the sudden invasion of the palace at an unearthly hour must have inflicted considerable loss and damage, and this was the main cause of the popular fury and excitement which led to the tragedy of the 24th night.

The Manipuri troops not only fought with the British inside the fort, but, after the first effect of the surprise attack was over, opened fire on the Residency and cut the telegraph wire. The official version gives the following account: "At 5 p.m. a heavy fire of shell and musketry was opened on the Residency from the opposite

walls of the Fort, while musketry fire also opened from the villages to the north and the south. The Hospital soon became untenable and the wounded were removed and placed under cover. At about 8 p.m. it became clear that the Residency could not be held much longer, and Mr. Quinton decided to enter into negotiations with the Regent".[57]

This account suppresses the very important fact that when the British position was almost a hopeless one, they sounded the bugle 'to cease fire', and though the Manipuris were in a position of vantage and under no obligation to cease fire, except on the unconditional surrender of the enemy, they did cease fire without any parley. This fact is admitted by Mrs. Grimwood[58] and clearly proves that the Manipur authorities had no vindictive desire to wreak vengeance upon the British for their treacherous attack in the morning.

As to the negotiations the official version runs as follows:

"A letter was accordingly written by Mr. Quinton to Kula Chandra Singh, proposing a cessation of hostilities, and a reply purporting to come from the Regent was received to the effect that he would cease firing if our troops would throw down their arms. There was some doubt as to the meaning of this letter, and it was suggested that a meeting should take place between Mr. Quinton and the Senapati This having been arranged Mr. Quinton walked out towards the Fort gate accompanied by Mr. Grimwood, Mr. Cossin, Colonel Skene, Lieutenant Simpson, and a native bugler".[59]

This account is supplemented by the statements of Mrs. Grimwood and Tikendrajit. Mrs. Grimwood says that the letter signed by the Chief Commissioner ran as follows: "On what condition will you cease firing on us, and give time to communicate with the Viceroy and repair the telegraph".[60] But before this letter was despatched there was 'cease fire' on both sides. What followed is thus described by Mrs. Grimwood.

"At last their guns ceased, and all was quiet. Then my husband went out with the letter and called a Manipuri off the wall to take it to the Jubraj. The man went away with it and my husband returned to the Residency. Some minutes later a message came to say that the Regent wished to see Mr. Quinton and talk over matters with him, and this message was followed by a letter written in Bengali, which contained an acknowledgment of the Chief's letter, and a proposal to the effect that we should surrender our arms if the Manipuris agreed to cease firing. 'We cannot lay down our arms', they said, 'for they belong to Government'. There was some discussion about the translation of part of this letter and Mr. Quinton proposed that the Jubraj should be called upon to explain the meaning of the passage in question, and asked whether it would be possible to see him.

"Meanwhile the Chief Commissioner's party consisting of himself, Colonel Skene, Mr. Cossin, Lieutenant Simpson and my husband had gone down to the office at our entrance gate and waited there while the Regent's letter was being translated".[61]

According to the contemporary Indian account the Maharaja's letter ran as follows: "Received your letter. I had never any intention to fight with you, but as your troops attacked the palace my men had to fight in self-defence. There is none in my palace who can read and understand English. But as I received your letter immediately after cease-fire, I take it that you want to conclude peace. If your soldiers give up arms, I shall conclude peace with you in a moment".[62]

There was some discussion about the true import of 'giving up arms' when Quinton suggested that the real meaning of it might be ascertained from the Jubraj. Grimwood then asked the Manipuri bearer of Maharaja's letter—"Will Jubraj see any of us?"

Manipuri—Of course, he will.

Quinton. Do you think it safe for us now to go to Jubraj?

Grimwood. No fear about that. (Turning to Manipuri) Can you swear that no danger will befall us if we go there?

Manipuri. We revere you as god. Why should we harm you?

Grimwood. He is one of the distinguished followers of Jubraj, belonging to his family. When he gives us assurance I don't see any objection to go.

Colonel Skene supported Grimwood and then all the five got out of the Residency together with a bugler.

As the Durbar Hall was closed, Jubraj had a talk with them in the courtyard for half an hour. He said "your conduct has made us afraid. So unless you give up arms we cannot rely solely on your oral assurance". The Chief Commissioner did not agree, and said there will be a *durbar* tomorrow. Then the Englishmen rose and Jubraj went to top-garad.[63]

The statement of Tikendrajit at his trial throws further light on the situation. It is reproduced below, substituting 'I' for the 'defendant':

"The British troops killed a number of subjects, women and children, burnt about a dozen houses with their goods and cattle in them, and the regular fighting commenced by the infuriated people without the distinct order of any particular leader. The fighting continued the whole day. In the evening the British bugle sounded "cease fire", and the operations were instantly stopped on both sides. A letter was received from the Chief Commissioner, and being in English, it was sent to the Regent's clerk for translation; but as the clerk was at a distance, it took a long time to find him out and get it translated; and in the meantime the British officer being anxious to get a reply, Mr. Grimwood shouted from the outside and

sent in a messenger, and it was arranged that they should hold a *durbar* in the Palace Durbar Hall. Mr. Quinton, Mr Grimwood, Lieutenant Simpson and two other gentlemen then came in and held the *durbar* with Angao Mingto and myself. After the usual salute and shaking of hands were over, I enquired about Mrs. Grimwood, and was informed of her safety. I then said that it was a matter very much to be regretted, that the Chief Commissioner has acted so unkindly, and thereby destroyed the friendship and amity which existed heretofore. The men were much infuriated by the hostile actions taken first by the British troops, and it was beyond my power to control them; but it was highly advisable to come to terms and desist from further actions. The officers then expressed their regret and said that they now wanted to go to Kohima, and there may be no more hostility on either side. It was then proposed by me that unless the arms of the British troops were made over, which I promised to have safely carried by my own coolies and delivered at Kohima, the mere words of the Chief Commissioner could hardly be relied on, as it appeared that he only pretended friendship in order to gain time for further attacks, since he used a lot of pretences about going to Tammu, then to Kohima, then to entertain a *natch* party, then to invite me to a *durbar*, while he arranged everything for my arrest. To this the officers disagreed, and I, desiring to consult the ministers of top-garad, left them with Angao Mingto".[a]

All that is known of the events that followed one another in quick succession ending with the cruel murder of five helpless and unarmed Englishmen, is derived from the statement of Tikendrajit and the witnesses during his trial, and the three petitions for mercy sent by Maharaja Kula-chandra, Tikendrajit, and the ladies of the royal family of Manipur.[65] The contemporary account written by an Indian closely agrees with them. These give minute details of all the incidents, which need not be repeated here as there is no means of testing their accuracy. The story is consistent and reasonaable and appears to be not very far from the truth. According to this Manipur version, after the negotiations failed, Tikendrajit sent one of his brothers, Angao Sena, to escort the British and see them safely out, while he himself returned to the top-garad. As soon as the British party moved towards the gate they were attacked by the excited crowd.[66] Angao Sena stood against the mob to save them, but failed. Grimwood was killed, Simpson was wounded, and the rest were overpowered. Tikendrajit, on hearing the uproar, came to the scene, "sent away the attackers, placed the three English gentlemen in the Hall, and carried the wounded Mr. Simpson himself into the Hall. At his order Jatra Singh gave Simpson water to drink and tied the wounded part with his own head-dress." After this Tikendrajit fell asleep, out of sheer exhaustion. Then, without his knowledge, and against his express orders, Tongol General had the four Englishmen and the bugler murdered. Tongol General, it is said, had personal grievance against Grimwood and Simpson for seducing his daughter, and he killed the rest to supress all evidence of his guilt. As soon as Tikendrajit awoke and learnt the whole affair, he took Tongol General severely to task

and the Maharaja also scolded him. Tikendrajit then set free the British troops and subjects who were captured and imprisoned, gave them food and raiment, and sent them to their destination after furnishing them with road expenses and escorts. The first part of the story is supported by British official account[67] and the general accuracy of the account was proved by Tikendrajit's witnesses during his trial.

The rest of the story may be briefly told. As Quinton and his party did not return to the Residency, and the firing from the palace began again, those who were in the British Residency, together with 200 Gurkha soldiers, stealthily left for Cachar, and were not molested on the way. They met the British force of 200 coming from Silchar, and safely reached the British territory on March 31.

The fate of Quinton and his party was first definitely known on 8 April from a letter of Maharaja Kula-chandra. Punitive military expeditions were immediately sent by the British Government to avenge the foul murder. Three columns of troops advanced simultaneously from Kohima on the north, Silchar on the west, and Tammu on the south-east. There was little resistance and the three columns met at Manipur on April 27 after two or three engagements in which the enemy suffered heavily. The palace was found deserted and Kula-chandra, Tikendrajit, their brothers, and Tongol General had all fled. A price was set upon their heads and by May 23 all of them, with many other persons accused of murdering the British Officers or taking part in the assault, were arrested, though some of them, including Tikendrajit, are said to have voluntarily surrendered. For the trial of all persons other than the members of the royal family two political officers were vested with full powers. For the trial of the members of the ruling family a Special Court (sometimes referred to as Special Commission) was constituted, consisting of two military officers and one political officer. No lawyer was allowed to appear before these courts.

The trial of Tongol General before the political officer lasted from May 22 till June 1, and he was sentenced to death. The trial of Tikendrajit before the Special Court commenced on June 1 and ended on June 10. The charges framed against him were: (1) Waging war against the Empress of India; (2) Abetment of murder of four British officers; and (3) Murder. Fifteen witnesses were examined on behalf of the prosecution and six for the accused, who also filed a written statement. Tikendrajit was found guilty on the first and second charges, and not guilty on the third. He was sentenced to death. Maharaja Kula-chandra and Angao Sena were

found guilty of waging war against the Queen-Empress, and sentenced to death.

The nature of the trial and the arguments on behalf of the accused will be discussed in detail in the appendix to this chapter. It will suffice here to state that the defence was mainly based on the question of facts and the legal status of the accused *vis à vis* the British Government.

Tikendrajit pleaded not guilty to all the three charges. He maintained that to defend his house against a surprise and treacherous attack cannot be regarded as waging war against the Queen. As regards murder, he stated the circumstances, mentioned above, and maintained that he took all possible steps to safeguard the prisoners, and had no reason to suspect that Tongol General, who heard in silence, signifying approval, his definite orders not to kill the Englishmen, would execute them during his sleep. The defence witnesses supported the statement of Tikendrajit and were not shaken by the cross-examination. The British Court, however, did not believe that Tongol General would dare to order execution against the wish of Tikendrajit.

After the sentences were passed by the Special Court the cases against the royal brothers were considered by the Governor-General in Council. Here, also, the accused were not permitted to engage a lawyer to argue the case, but they submitted petitions for mercy[68] and their legal adviser, Manmohan Ghosh of the Calcutta Bar, submitted his arguments in writing.[69] Sir A. E. Miller, the Law Member of the Governor-General's Council, argued the case on behalf of the Government.

It was pointed out on behalf of the accused that Manipur was an independent State and the British had no right to attack the house of Tikendrajit in order to arrest him. Miller argued that even though the status of Manipur was never defined in clear terms, the British action was fully justified in view of the past precedents. The Viceroy upheld this view, which he expressed as follows in a telegram, dated 5 June, 1891, to the Secretary of State:[70] "Manipur is a subordinate Native State. We rendered it independent of Burma. We have recognized succession in Manipur and have asserted suzerainty in many ways; and Manipur ruling family have repeatedly acknowledged their position of dependence". He cited several concrete instances which hardly leave any doubt about his contention.[70a] Miller's argument is more questionable. "We have unquestionably the right", said he, "to treat the murder of European British subjects as a crime wherever committed in India, even in States, as independent as Afghanistan or Nepal; and we have also ex-

ercised, possibly originally by usurpation, but at any rate so long and so uniformly that the right has become firmly established, the prerogative of removing, by administrative order, from any Native State, any person from the sovereign downwards, whose presence there we deem objectionable on any grounds whatever. These two principles will, as I view this case, be sufficient to enable us to dispose of all the questions".[71]

The Governor-General confirmed the death sentences of Tikendrajit and Tongol General, and commuted the death sentences of Maharaja Kula-chandra and his brother Angao Sena to transportation for life, with confiscation of property. Tikendrajit and Tongol were publicly hanged on 13th August amid the heart-rending cries of thousands of men and women. The sentences of death passed on nine other accused persons (guards, executioners etc.) were commuted to transportation for life. Thus the curtain fell on the tragic drama at Manipur. There is hardly any doubt that the sentence passed on Tikendrajit cannot be justified by available evidence even if we admit the jurisdiction of the tribunal, set up by the British Government, to try him. Two points emerge clearly from an unbiassed consideration of the whole affair. In the first place, Tikendrajit's so-called rebellion was an act of self-defence against an unprovoked, one might say treacherous, attack. There is no clear evidence that Tikendrajit actually violated any order of the Maharaja banishing him, or would have done so. His banishment from Manipur was a condition imposed upon the Maharaja, who merely pleaded for a few days' delay to execute it, but never declined to do so. If he did not fulfil this condition, the British might have withdrawn the whole offer including the recognition of him as king. Tikendrajit was not, in any case, liable for the remissness, if there were any, and the British had no right to attack his house. Nor can it be supported by any consideration of justice or equity. To resist an unwarranted aggression cannot certainly be treated as a rebellion or act of waging war against the British Queen.

Secondly, as regards murder or abetment to murder, the charge was certainly not proved against Tikendrajit, and the circumstantial narrative in the petition signed by the ladies of the Manipur royal family and put in as defence by Tikendrajit, has not been rebutted by any evidence worth the name. Even if one cannot fully accept all the particulars stated therein, the least that one can say is that Tikendrajit was certainly entitled to the benefit of doubt.

On the other hand, there is enough evidence to show that the British Government had a special grudge against Tikendrajit. This was first manifested in 1888 in the unsuccessful attempt to banish

him from Manipur, to which reference has been made above. In the official resolution about the palace revolution in September, 1890, Tikendrajit was singled out for punishment, while Kula-chandra, who derived the greatest benefit, was allowed to enjoy his ill-gotten gain. Tikendrajit was held as the chief conspirator, though according to all evidence, it was his younger brothers who made the *coup*. It may be that Tikendrajit was involved in the conspiracy, but that was at best a conjecture, and he was given no opportunity to rebut it.

Even in the official version of the rebellion there is a distinct attempt to fasten positive crimes upon Tikendrajit. Thus referring to the conference between Tikendrajit and the British officers on the fateful evening of the 24th March, the official version observes: "It had apparently been Tikendrajit's intention to entrap all the British officers. The Chief Commissioner's letter already mentioned was conveyed by a sepoy to Tikendrajit, who said to the messenger—'There are fourteen Sahibs in the Residency, send them all to meet me, and I swear I will not fire on them".[72]

This is not only not referred to by anybody else, but is incompatible with the account of that incident given above. It is contradicted by the Manipur version as well as Mrs. Grimwood's statement, at least by implication. It is palpably untrue and absurd, and was evidently prompted by a sinister motive to blacken the character of Tikendrajit.

A far more serious attempt in the same direction is the following statement in the official version: "On the 25th March at midday, they reached the rest-house at Myangkhang. At 5 P.M. the Manipur official in charge of the post received a letter from Tikendrajit. This letter is not forthcoming, but there is evidence to the effect that it contained instructions to the Manipur officials to arrest all British subjects, and kill those who might offer resistance".[73]

By what means the exact purport of the missing letter came to be known to the British is not difficult to imagine. After the conquest of Manipur by the British, their anxiety to hold Tikendrajit mainly responsible for the rebellion was widely known, and people would not be wanting who would seek the favour of the British by making all sorts of allegations, true or false, against him. It is probably some such source that is responsible for the statement about the letter alleged to have been written by Tikendrajit.

A quasi-judicial trial, prompted by such ideas of vendetta against an individual, hardly deserves to be called a trial, and the punishment inflicted upon Tikendrajit is bound to be regarded by many as a judicial murder.

The real crime for which Tikendrajit paid the extreme penalty was not the charge brought against him in 1891, or in 1888 (for which he was sentenced to banishment at the instance of the British), but his capability and manliness which the British could not tolerate in the *de jure* or *de facto* ruler of any Native State. This is amply illustrated by the British attitude to Wazir Ali of Awadh and several other Ruling Chiefs, such as those of Sātārā, Bharatpur and Coorg, dealt with in this volume. Here, in the case of Tikendrajit, the cat was let out of the bag by the Under-Secretary of State for India, in his speech in the British Parliament, defending the punishment inflicted upon Tikendrajit. After referring to his ability, good character and popularity, he went on to say that the Government of India had never encouraged men of that kind. "Governments", said he, "have always hated and discouraged independent and original talent, and they have always loved and promoted docile and unpretending mediocrity. This is not a new policy. It is as old as Tarquinius Superbus; and although in these modern times we do not lop or cut off the heads of the tall poppies, we take other and more merciful means of reducing any person of dangerous pre-eminence to a harmless condition."[74]

For once a British statesman had publicly stated the real policy which guided the Government of India in their treatment of Indian rulers, but which they took good care to conceal under a verbiage of effusions of sympathy and professions of disinterested motive for the welfare of the people.

The removal of the royal family raised to the forefront the question of the future settlement of Manipur. Even before the British troops had captured Manipur, the British Government issued a proclamation on April 19, declaring the authority of Kula-chandra to be at an end, and assumption of the administration of the State by the General Officer commanding the British troops in Manipur territory. Another proclamation, issued on 21 August, 1891, stated that although the Manipur State was liable to the penalty of annexation it was decided to re-establish the native rule.[75] It was accordingly notified on 18 September, 1891, that Chura Chand was selected as Raja of Manipur. He was a boy of five and great-grandson of Raja Nar Singh of Manipur, who had usurped the throne of Manipur and whose sons, brother and brother's son had rebelled against both Maharaja Chandra-kirtti and Maharaja Sura-chandra immediately after their accession.[76] The *sanad* granted to the new king imposed an annual tribute and also the condition that the Raja and his successors shall carry out "all orders given by the British Government

with regard to the administration...and any other matters in which the British Government may be pleased to intervene".[77]

As the new King of Manipur was a minor, the new Political Agent in Manipur was also appointed the Superintendent of the State with full powers of administration. It was also decided to impose a fine on the people of Manipur, as a community, for their misconduct.

APPENDIX.

THE TRIAL OF TIKENDRAJIT

The trial of Tikendrajit before the Special Court (also referred to as Special Commission), mentioned above, commenced on June 1. Three charges were framed against him, namely, waging war against the British, murder and abetment of murder of the British officers. As mentioned above, the defence on the first charge was based on the status of Manipur and this had also a great bearing on the defence in regard to the two remaining charges. It is therefore necessary to examine this point at some length.

I. STATUS OF MANIPUR.

Mention has been made above of the creation of the State of Manipur with Gambhir Singh as ruler, by Article II of the Treaty of Yandabo (1826) which terminated the First Burmese War. It runs as follows: "With regard to Manipur, it is stipulated that should Gambhir Singh desire to return to that country, he shall be recognised by the King of Ava as Raja thereof" [78]. It leaves vague and undefined the exact status of the Manipur State, and there is no subsequent treaty to indicate that it was a vassal State, either of Burma or of the British. No exception need therefore be taken to either Aitchison's remark that Gambhir Singh "was declared independent" by the Treaty of Yandabo[79], or the statement by Hunter that "in 1826 peace was concluded with Burma and Manipur was declared independent of Burma". It is interesting to note that both these statements [80] proved highly inconvenient to the British, when Tikendrajit, during his trial, challenged the right of the British authorities or courts to try the general of an independent State. There was a flutter in the dovecot. G. Forrest, in a letter dated 18 June, 1891, drew the attention of Sir H. Mortimer Durand to these two statements, and undertook to correct Aitchison's remark in a fresh edition. The reply of Mortimer Durand is an important document and may be quoted in full. "Hunter never wrote an accurate sentence in his life. I think we have made the position of Manipur pretty clear now. The Maharaja presented a Nazar to Lord Northbrook

in 1874, and we have at their own request acknowledged successions and done other acts of the same nature. They have repeatedly professed their readiness to obey our orders etc. We have upheld their Chiefs by force of arms and given away their territory, and asserted supremacy in a variety of ways.

"But I knew that the remark of Hunter, coupled with the fact that Manipur has no Adoption Sanad, would do harm"[81]

As mentioned above[82], the Viceroy also advanced similar arguments in order to support the contention that Manipur was a subordinate State. This is a tacit admission that while theoretically the British Government had no suzerainty over Manipur, this petty State, as was inevitable, acted as a subordinate ally, thereby giving rise to a prescriptive right of supremacy or suzerainty to the British. In other words, the authority, which the British undoubtedly exercised over Manipur, was not based on any legal right, but was merely derived from the natural right of the strong over the weak, fortified by the prerogatives of a Paramount Power, a role assumed by the British since 1818.

The status of Manipur from a legal point of view was ably discussed by Monmohan Ghosh in his Memorandum of Arguments submittted to the Governor-General in Council on behalf of Kulachandra Singh and Tikendrajit and the members of the royal family of Manipur who were sentenced by the Special Commission.[83] Ghosh maintained that Manipur was an independent State like Nepal. He pointed out that the British never acquired Manipur by conquest, but entered into certain treaties whereby a certain amount of protection was promised to Manipur on certain conditions. Manipur never paid any tribute to the British Government of India and the treaties governing the relation between the two never state explicitly, nor even suggest by implication, that Manipur was in any way subordinate to the British or owed allegiance to the sovereign of England.

In the absence of any express reservation or declaration of such allegiance, the mere fact that the weaker power has occasionally submitted to be dictated to in the management of its internal affairs by the higher power, does not create such an allegiance as would make the weaker power liable to be tried for treason which implies a breach of allegiance to the Sovereign. In support of Mr. Ghosh's argument reference may be made to the Agreement between the two States dated 18 April, 1833. It is laid down in Clause 7 that "in the event of anything happening on the eastern frontier of the British territories, the Raja (of Manipur) will assist the British Government with a portion of his troops".[84] This and the other clauses of this Agreement, particularly clauses 5 and 6, do not seem to be compatible with

the relation between a suzerain and a vassal State. Mr. Ghosh further pointed out that the absence of such a relationship was tacitly admitted when, on 23 March, Mr. Quinton sent Mr. Grimwood to Maharaja Kula-chandra to demand the surrender of Tikendrajit or a written authority to arrest him. Mr. Ghosh also referred to some legal precedents, both from India and outside. In 1865 (and again in 1867) the High Court of Calcutta held that the Raja of Manipur was "an Asiatic Sovereign in alliance with the Queen", clearly implying that the Government of India had hitherto dealt with Manipur on the footing of its being a Sovereign Power in alliance with, and not as owing any allegiance to, the Queen. The High Court also held, in agreement with the Governor-General in Council, that the Tributary Mahals of Orissa did not form part of British India, and Mayurbhanj was an independent State in spite of "acts of interference by the British authorities". The status of Manipur was certainly higher than that of Mayurbhanj which was ceded to the British by the Bhonsle. Mr. Ghosh cited the case of Ionian Islands which not only became a British Protectorate in 1815 under the Treaty of Paris, but whose administration was in the hands of a High Commissioner appointed by the King of Great Britain. When, during the Crimean War, an Ionian vessel, engaged in trading with Russia, was seized by the British fleet, the Court of Admiralty released it on the ground that the people of the Ionian Islands were not British subjects in the proper sense of the term, and they did not owe any allegiance to the British Crown, because allegiance exists only between the Sovereign and his subjects properly so called, which they were not.

In view of all these Mr. Ghosh held that as the accused members of the Manipur royal family were not British subjects, the Special Court set up by the Government of India had no jurisdiction to try them. Further, the section of the Indian Penal Code under which they were charged with 'waging war against the Queen' was applicable only to British subjects or people under the authority of the British Government of India.[85]

II. THE TRIAL

As noted above, Sura-chandra, Tikendrajit and others were tried by a Special Court. The accused were not permitted to engage any competent pleader on their behalf, though they were allowed to submit a written representation. As Mr. Ghosh pointed out, this was against the British tradition "that every British subject has the right, no matter how atrocious the crime with which he is charged, to be defended by the Counsel at every stage of the proceedings

against him". For, "there is a vast difference between arguing a case *viva voce* and submitting a written defence; the former enables the Counsel to remove the doubts or misconceptions of the trial-judge, and every point may be thoroughly discussed and explained." A statement to the following effect was made by Braja Mohan Singh in a sworn affidavit:

> I was the Private Secretary of Jubraj Tikendrajit. I wrote out a petition on his behalf to the Special Court praying that time might be given him to enable him to get pleaders from Cachar to defend him at the trial. The Jubraj signed it and it was presented to the Special Court by Chandra Singh. The Court rejected the prayer and returned the petition and we were told to engage some one who might be available at Manipur. Then, at the suggestion of Partha Singh, who acted as interpreter at the trial, and of one Kulendra Singh, the Police Officer who arrested the Jubraj, I advised him to engage the services of Janaki Nath Basak and Bama-charan Mukhopadhyay, who were the only persons available in Manipur for that purpose and understood English.*

Accordingly two days after the trial began, Major Maxwell, who conducted the case on behalf of the Government, sent for Janaki Nath Basak and asked him to defend Tikendrajit. He agreed to do so on receiving one thousand Rupees. But as he himself said, he was not a lawyer and never had any experience of how criminal trials were conducted.

Mr. Monmohan Ghosh argued in his Memorandum that the "Manipur princes were not, and could not have been tried under the Indian Penal Code, or any other British law." Referring to the Special Court Mr. Ghosh pointed out that "it was not constituted under any legal authority derivable from any Act of the British Parliament or Indian Legislature. The Government was the accuser, its own officers held the first trial, and it was the Government who heard the final appeal. None of the two military and one civil officials who constituted the Special Court had any legal training or knowledge of judicial procedure followed during criminal trials. The inquisitorial cross-examination of the accused by the members of the Court was a procedure repugnant to the humane traditions of British justice which, had it been adopted by any judge or magistrate in British India, would have called forth severe censure from the High Court."

The members of the court could not understand the witnesses who deposed in Manipuri language, and accordingly an interpreter was appointed. According to the sworn affidavit of Brajamohan Singh, Partha Singh, who was appointed interpreter, was an employee of Pucca Sena, the chief enemy of Tikendrajit. The procedure followed was that Partha Singh translated the statement of witnesses into Urdu, and Mr. Maxwell re-translated it into English.

Janaki Nath Basak, in a sworn affidavit,[87] pointed out the discrepancies between the statements of witnesses and the version given by the interpreter or recorded by the Court. He says: "I informed the Court many times that Partha Singh's translation was not correct. One of the judges (Major Ridgway) corrected his mistakes many times". Basak cites an instance: "Jatra Singh in evidence said: 'As soon as Jubraj began to talk with Tongol General about the order said to have been given by the General to kill the Sahibs, I came away without waiting to learn what reply the Jubraj made to the Tongol General.' But the Special Court has recorded: 'Jubraj did not say anything'. This is not correct. Again I distinctly recollect that the witness Aru Singh, *alias* Utsaba (Usurba), said, among other things, 'Jubraj told Tongol General that the Sahibs must not be killed on any account', but this was not recorded by the Court".

Janaki Nath Basak who, as mentioned above, was permitted to defend Tikendrajit, wrote the latter's statement in English and submitted it to the Special Court. He states in his sworn affidavit:

"The President of the Special Court told me that the language of the statement was defective and required correction. Accordingly he made some alterations and returned the statement to me I was then asked by him to revise it with the help of an Englishman named Du Moulin, the special correspondent of the *Pioneer* and certain other English papers. After the statement was thus revised I got it signed by the Jubraj (Tikendrajit). I now understand (presumably as a result of consultation with Mr. Ghosh) that the revised statement has attributed to him some words which he never meant or said (some concrete instances are cited). Immediately after my arrival in Calcutta I showed to Mr. Ghosh the original draft of my statement, with the corrections made therein by the President of the Special Court and Mr. Du Moulin with their own hands, and forward the same herewith. Neither Maharaj Kula-chandra nor Yuvaraj Tikendrajit knows a word of English. The draft I prepared of the statement of Maharaj Kula-chandra underwent revision".

Mr. Monmohan Ghosh also laid stresss on this point in his Memorandum.

These must be considered as serious defects in the trial. In addition, it should be remembered that in the absence of a competent defence pleader the witnesses were not properly cross-examined in order to bring out facts that might be of the utmost importance in favour of the defence. The evidence against the accused was left almost where the prosecution chose to leave it. Mr. Monmohan Ghosh pointed out how the failure to cross-examine the witnesses on some vital points vitiated the whole judgment. On the whole it is difficult not to agree with the contention of Mr. Monmohan Ghosh that "having regard to the nature of the tribunal, and the manner in which the trial was conducted, the accused belonging to the royal family of Manipur were practically undefended and

had not received any fair and impartial trial, which the humblest British subject could have claimed as a matter of right."

Arguing on the merits of the case, Mr. Ghosh pointed out that the accused did not invade British territory, nor committed any hostile act against the officers and men of the British Residency; they merely defended the palace which was attacked by the British without any declaration of war. The Maharaja did not wage war against the Queen and had no wish to do so. The moment the British forces invaded the palace it became the duty of the King, the soldiers and officers of Manipur to resist the troops of another Power. Maharaja Kula-chandra, while acquiescing in the acts of his officers in repelling the attack upon the palace, had no intention whatever to wage war against Her Majesty the Queen. There is no evidence that Tikendrajit had at any time any intention of waging war against the Queen until his palace was attacked. His order of cease-fire on hearing the English signal also proves that he never intended hostility against the British.

Tikendrajit was brother, officer and subject of Maharaja Kula-chandra who alone had the right of punishing him. Mr. Quinton evidently held the same view and therefore sent Mr. Grimwood to the Maharaja as stated above. It was stated by the Government witness Rasik Lal Kundu that even Mr. Grimwood, during his interview with the Jubraj, did not say anything to the effect that the British might arrest him by force. As Tikendrajit expressed his willingness to leave Manipur in accordance with the order of the British Government, the whole trouble might have been avoided by granting him a short time for which he prayed.

As regards the second charge, namely, abetting the murder of the Englishmen, Mr. Ghosh made a lengthy analysis of the prosecution evidences and summed up the facts elicited from them as follows:

'What then is the result of all this evidence? If believed, it proves that the idea of killing the *Sahibs* originated with the Tongol General, that the Jubraj expressed his surprise when the matter was first reported to him, so much so, that he himself came to enquire if the report he had received was true; that he then had some conversation with the General, regarding the nature of which the prosecution can throw no light; that after the lapse of more than half an hour, while the Jubraj was apparently sleeping, the General repeated his previous order; that the sentries had no direct order from any one except Tongol, and that the *Sahibs* were beheaded by the public executioner'. Mr. Ghosh then argued: "It cannot be possibly suggested that the surprise at first expressed by the Jubraj

was simulated, or was not perfectly genuine, for at that time there was no reason why he should have acted a part to deceive his own adherents and people after having openly resisted the British troops. If then he honestly took the trouble of going to the Tongol General to remonstrate with him, would the Government be justified in inferring (in the absence of any evidence as to what passed between him and the General) that he must have eventually agreed with the General? Is that a necessary inference?".[88]

But while the evidence for the prosecution was wholly negative in character, the evidence of the defence witnesses clearly maintained that the Jubraj positively forbade the Tongol General not to kill the *Sahibs*. And they were not shaken from this position by the cross-examination in the Court.

Mr. Ghosh concluded as follows:

"As regards the charge of abetment of murder, the evidence adduced by the prosecution entirely fails to establish the complicity of the Jubraj, and that, on the contrary, there is enough on the record to raise a strong presumption in his favour, that he was entirely opposed to the murder of the British officers, and that the orders of the Tongol General were carried out in spite of his protests and without his knowledge".[89]

But neither facts nor arguments could move the Government of India from its determination to cut off the tall poppy, as the Roman king put it. Tikendrajit paid the supreme penalty of law, not for his crime but for his courage and ability

It is now definitely known that the Viceroy, Lord Lansdowne, sanctioned the judicial murder of Tikendrajit in spite of the remonstrances of Her Majesty, the Queen-Empress Queen Victoria wrote to Lord Cross, the Secretary of State for India, on 8 August, 1891: "I can only regret the decision as to the Senapati. I cannot consider that the Senapati was not aware of our *intention to seize him* and thus HAD CAUSE for resistance. The Queen...thinks we... ought not to hang the Senapati, though certainly Tongal." In reply Cross informed the Queen on 9 August that he "had written to the Viceroy so often and so strongly that no one of the Princes at Manipur or indeed anyone else should suffer unless absolutely identified with the assassinations ...." Two days later the Queen again wrote to Cross: "The reasons why she regrets the Jubraj's sentence of death being carried out are threefold. First, because... the seizure in Durbar was wrong and gave the Jubraj an excuse for resistanc.... Secondly, because he was not convicted of wilful murder, and thirdly, because she has a great and strong feeling

that the principle of governing India by fear and by crushing them, instead of by firmness and conciliation, is one which never will answer in the end and which the Queen-Empress would wish to see more and more altered..... She intends neither writing nor saying anything to him (Viceroy) about it, as he is evidently very sore about it." Nevertheless, we find the Queen sending a cypher telegram to the Viceroy on 12 August, 1891: "—Baboo who defended Senapati appeals to me for commutation. Is it possible to do this?" The Viceroy replied on the same day: "I entertain no doubt commutation of sentence would be a grave public misfortune, and I regard it as now absolutely impossible".[90] Comment is superfluous on this very interesting correspondence which throws a flood of light on the whole episode and supports the point of view urged by the author of this chapter.

This episode may be fittingly concluded by quoting the comments of Captain Hearsey, an Anglo-Indian military official of the time. He says:

"The tone of the Government organs, such as the *Englishman* of Calcutta, the *Pioneer* and *Morning Post* of Allahabad, especially the latter, has been towards the accused Princes of Manipur spiteful and vindictive in the extreme, and this feeling has, in a very great measure, been shared by the Government officials themselves It is an axiom of law and justice not to comment on a case that is "*sub-judice*", yet these organs have been incessant throughout the whole course of the trials of uttering constant and reiterated shrieks for blood; it has, to say, been a cry of hang first and try afterwards This last-mentioned cry I have not only seen expressed by the rabid anti-Indian Press, but I regret to say echoed by many who deem themselves to be honest, just, well-educated Englishmen. But if this is the *modern* Englishman's idea of fair play and justice, I shall feel proud that I can call myself an Anglo-Indian."[91]

Later, Capt. Hearsey observes: "The trial of the accused Princes has been one of the most outrageous farces and parodies of justice that have ever yet been exhibited to the Indian nation".[92]

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1 See pp. 107-8.
2. Considerable difficulty is experienced in writing the names of these royal brothers, as they are sometimes referred to by their official designations, which are also written in slightly varying forms For full personal names and official designations, cf. *MCR*, 91.
3. B. 7. Mrs. Grimwood also entertained a very bad opinion about Pucca Sena. Cf. *GRM*, 145.
4. For more details about the relation between the brothers, cf., *GRM*, 150 ff.; *MCR*, 100 ff.; B. 10.
5. D. 6, D. 7.
6. That Tikendrajit was liked by both Mr. and Mrs. Grimwood will be clear from a perusal of *GRM*, 175-7.
7. B. 10; *MCR*, 100 ff.
8. Tikendrajit's name is not mentioned in the first report of Grimwood (B. 10).
9. The versions of both are given in D. 4. The extracts quoted are taken from this document.
10. *GRM*, 142.
11. B. 6.
12. D. 1, para. 9.

13. D. 1, para. 11; also cf., B. 15.
14. Maharaja Sura-chandra alleged that Grimwood was influenced by a letter which was handed over to him by Tasu Sardar, a Muslim photographer, while they were talking. Grimwood, however, denied the change, and asserted that the letter which was in the file could have been seen by the Maharaja if he liked. Cf. D. 4.
15. Capt. A. W. Hearsey, *Manipur* (1891), pp. 1-3. For reference to Muslim phototographer, see fn. 14.
16. B. 7.
17. B. 8.
18. B. 10.
19. D. 4.
20. D. 2.
21. D. 1, para. 10.
22. D. 2.
23. D. 1, para. 12.
24. *GRM*, 149 ff.
25. B. 10.
26. D. 4. See pp. 711-14.
27. B. 13.
28. B. 14.
29. B. 16, 17.
30. These and other details were not finally settled till 19 March, 1891, as will be stated later.
31. B. 18.
32. B. 20.
33. B. 32; D. 1, para. 16.
34. *GRM*, 168.
35. D. 1, paras 16, 18. As there was no secret code in use, the Chief Commissioner could not send any written communication to the Political Agent at Manipur and therefore sent a verbal message through Gurdon.
35a. *GRM*. 181.
36. D. 1, para. 19.
37. Ibid, para. 20.
38. D. 2.
39. *GRM*, 182.
40. D. 1, para. 20.
41. D. 2, D. 3. *Ekadasi* is the eleventh lunar day of the fortnight. It may be mentioned that the Maharaja objected to the holding of the *durbar* on 22 March as it was *ekadasi*, a day of fast, and also a Sunday. Mr. Quinton, however, brushed aside these objections, and pretended to be in a hurry to go out for hunting.
42. *GRM*, 183-4.
42a. *GRM*, 182.
43. D. 3; *MCR*, 138. All this is ignored in the official version.
44. D. 3. The time for the proposed *durbar* on 22 March is given as 9 A.M. in D. 1, para. 20, but Mrs. Grimwood puts it at 8 A.M. (*GRM*, 185).
45. D. 3.
46. *MCR*, 142-5.
47. *GRM*, 190-92.
48. D. 2.
49. D. 1, para. 21.
50. *Pat* refers to the palace.
51. D. 3.
52. *MCR*, 152.
53. D. 1, para. 22.
54. According to the official version, the British forces entered the fort and, halting before the house of the Jubraj, asked for his whereabouts, when the party was at once fired on at close quarters. But even this does not mean that the Manipuris took the offensive, for it is admitted that the British troops had entered inside the fort, and the Manipuri troops had every right to fire upon the nocturnal invaders.
55. D. 1, para. 29.
56. D. 1, paras. 22, 29.
57. D. 1, para. 23.

58. *GRM*, 216.
59. D. 1, para. 23.
60. *GRM*, 215.
61. *GRM*, 216; Cf., *MCR* (second edition), 151.
62. *MCR*, 150.
63. All this conversation is recorded in *MCR*, in Bengali (pp. 150-52), but the source of information is not stated by the author.
64. D. 2.
65. D. 2, D. 3, B. 21, B. 22. Also cf., Foreign Department Documents, Proceedings, September, 1891, No. 130.
66. According to *MCR*2 (p. 153), as soon as the Englishmen neared the gate the excited Manipuris closed it, threw brickbats at them and struck them with the butt-ends of guns.
67. Of course, so far as the main incidents were concerned; but it is silent about the actual perpetrator of the murder (D. 1, para. 24).
68. B. 21, B. 22.
69. B. 35. Foreign Department Proceedings, September 1891, Nos. 120-29.
70. B. 32.
70a. The Viceroy cites instances such as the presentation of *nazar* by the Maharaja to the Viceroy in 1874 and the acceptance of a *khilat*, recognition of Sura-chandra by the Government of India as the heir and successor of his father, at the request of the latter, and similar recognition of Kula-chandra as successor of Sura-chandra. It was also pointed out by the Viceroy that the Government of India, on more than one occasion, punished those who rebelled against the Manipur Government.
71. Foreign Department Proceedings, Secret-E, June 1891, Nos. 101-56; July, 1891, Nos. 3-53; September 1891, Nos. 71-101.
72. D. 1, para. 25.
73. D. 1, para. 27.
74. Speech by Sir John Gorst, Under-Secretary of State for India, in the Manipur Debate in the House of Commons on June 16, 1891(Hansard, Series 3; Vol. 354, p. 567).
75. B. 36.
76. See above p. 709.
77. Aitchison. *Treaties and Engagements*, etc. XII, 198.
78. Ibid, 200.
79. Ibid, 102.
80. Reference may be made to other statements to the same effect. For example, Mr. Brown writes in 1873 in the *Statistical Account of Manipur* that "on the conclusion of the Burmese War by the treaty of Yandabo in 1826, Manipur was declared independent." Quoted by Roy, 81.
81. D. 5. Durand was Foreign Secretary in India.
82. See p. 728.
83. See 'Appeal', pp. 9 ff.
84. Aitchison, XII, 196.
85. For the arguments of Mr. Monmohan Ghosh, cf., 'Appeal'.
86. B. 24. 'Appeal'.
87. B. 23. 'Appeal'.
88. 'Appeal', 23.
89. 'Appeal', 35.
90. *The Letters of Queen Victoria*—Third Series, Edited by G. E. Buckle (1931), pp. 55-7. I am indebted to Dr. D. K. Ghosh for drawing by attention to this correspondence.
91. Captain A W. Hearsey, *Manipur*, p. 1.
92. Ibid, p. 7.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANISATION

I. THE HOME GOVERNMENT

1. *Transfer of Power*

The most momentous consequence of the Mutiny and the Revolt of 1857-8 was the final extinction of the East India Company and the assumption of the administration of India by the British Crown. As noted above,[1] things were rapidly moving in this direction, but the process was quickened by the great events of 1857. Lord Palmerston, the British Prime Minister, correctly interpreted the will of the British people when he intimated, after the general election of 1857 in Britain, that the Government would bring in a Bill for placing the Government of India under the direct authority of the Crown. The East India Company made a last effort to avert the inevitable. The Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Company wrote a letter expressing surprise that without inputing any blame to the Company in connection with the Mutiny, and without instituting any inquiry by Parliament, the Government should have proposed the immediate suppression of the Company. They also submitted a formal petition to the Parliament against the proposed Bill. This document, drafted by John Stuart Mill, gave very cogent reasons against the course of action proposed by the Government. It pointed out that if the administration of India had been a failure, the fault lay not with the Company, but with the British Government, represented by the President of the Board of Control, which was the principal branch of the ruling authority in the Double Government and had necessarily the decisive share in every error, real or supposed.

And lastly, against the reproach levelled against a Double Government, the petitioners urged,

> "It is considered an excellence, not a defect, in the constitution of Parliament, to be not merely a double but a triple Government. An executive authority, your petitioners urge, may often, with advantage, be single, because promptitude is its first requisite. But the function of passing a deliberate opinion on past measures, and laying down principles of future policy, is a business which, in the estimation of your petitioners, admits of and requires the concurrence of more judgments than one. It is no defect in such a body to be double, and no excellence to be single".[2]

The petition, however, produced no effect upon the Government of Palmerston, and a Bill for the abolition of Company's rule and the future Government of India was introduced in the Parliament. But before the Bill could be passed, Lord Palmerston's Gov-

ernment fell and was replaced by Lord Derby's Conservative Government. Benjamin Disraeli, the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the new Government, introduced a new India Bill. It was "complicated, unworkable and grotesque", and provoked the comment of Palmerston that "whenever he saw a man laughing in the streets, he was sure that man had been discussing Mr. Disraeli's Bill."[3] As a matter of fact, when the Parliament met Disraeli's Bill found no supporters. In criticizing the common element in the two Bills, namely leaving the Government of India to the unchecked power of a minister, in a further report, drafted on behalf of the East India Company, John Stuart Mill observed:

"The Minister, it is true, is to have a Council. But the most despotic rulers have councils. The difference between the Council of a despot, and a Council which, prevents the ruler from being a despot is, that the one is dependent on him, the other independent; that the one has some power of its own, the other has not. By the first Bill (Lord Palmerston's Bill) the whole Council is nominated by the Minister; by the second (Disraeli's Bill) one-half of it is nominated by him. The functions to be entrusted to it are left, in both, with some slight exceptions, to the Minister's own discretion".[4]

The comment of R. C. Dutt on this observation is worth quoting:

"The argument is unanswerable And after the experience of half a century many thoughtful men will be inclined to hold that a strong and independent deliberative body might have tempered the action of the Crown Minister, and secured a better administration of Indian affairs. The Directors of the Company formed such a body, but they represented the interests of the Company's shareholders, not of the Indian people That was the defect of the old system; that was the evil which required a remedy. But in the task of reorganisation which Parliament undertook in 1858, this defect was not remedied The power of the Court of Directors was destroyed, but no independent deliberative body, representing the people of India safeguarding their interests and their welfare, found place in the new scheme of administration."[5]

The new petition of the Company bore no fruit and Mr Disraeli's Bill was dead. In order to frame a new one, the principles of the new scheme were first discussed in the House, and then a Bill, the joint production of both parties, was introduced. The new Bill became law in August 1858, and is known as 'An Act for the better Government of India.'

The Act for the better Government of India, which received the royal assent on the 2nd August, 1858, provided that India shall be governed directly by and in the name of Her Majesty, acting through a Secretary of State, to whom were to be transferred the powers formerly exercised either by the Court of Directors or by the Board of Control, and that "all the territorial and other revenues of or arising in India...shall be received for and in the name of Her Majesty, and shall be applied and disposed of for the pur-

poses of the Government of India alone". A month later the Court of Directors made over their trust of the dominion of India to the Crown in the following touching words: "Let Her Majesty appreciate the gift—let her take the vast country and the teeming millions of India under her direct control; but let Her not forget the great corporation from which she has received them nor the lessons to be learnt from its success". The transfer of control over Indian territories from the Company to the Crown in 1858 was, more or less, a formal transaction. In fact, it was the culmination of a process that had begun from 1784, if not from 1773. Speaking on the India Bill on the 15th July, 1858, Lord Derby observed:

"...in point of fact, the transfer of authority to the Crown is more nominal than real, because, although the Court of Directors have been in a position to exercise certain powers of obstruction and delay, I believe that, with the single exception of the power of recalling the Governor-General, there was no single act which they were enabled to perform without the assent of the President of the Board of Control".*

2. *The Crown*

By the Act of 1858 all territories in the possession of, and all powers hitherto exercised by the East India Company were vested in Her Majesty, the Queen, and India was to be governed by and in the name of Her Majesty, by one of her principal Secretaries of State. Provision was made for the appointment of a fifth Secretary of State for this purpose, who, with the aid of a Council, would perform all the duties and exercise all the powers so long vested in the East India Company and the President of the Board of Control.

The appointment of Governor-General of India and Governors of Presidencies in India was to be made by Her Majesty. All existing Acts and provisions of law and the treaties made by the Company, as well as all contracts, covenants, liabilities and engagements of the Company were to continue in force.

The assumption of the administration of India by the Crown was communicated to the people of India by a Proclamation issued in the name of Queen Victoria. The first draft of the Proclamation was not liked by Her Majesty, and she asked the Prime Minister, Lord Derby, to re-write it: "Bearing in mind that it is a female Sovereign who speaks to more than a hundred millions of Eastern People, on assuming the direct government over them, and after a bloody war, giving them pledges which her future reign is to redeem, and explaining the principles of her government. Such a document should breathe feelings of generosity, benevolence, and religious toleration, and point out the privileges which the Indians will receive in being placed on an equality with the subjects of the

British Crown, and the prosperity following in the train of civilisation".[7]

The Proclamation, drafted according to the wishes of the Queen, was publicly read on 1 November, 1858, in all the District towns in India. This Proclamation, far better known to the Indians than the Act of 1858, was for nearly half a century regarded as a Charter of their rights. After announcing the appointment of Viscount Canning as her first Viceroy and Governor-General and confirming all persons then employed in the civil and military services of the Company, the Proclamation held out the following assurances to the Chiefs and peoples of India.

"We hereby announce to the Native Princes of India, that treaties and engagements made with them by or under the authority of the Honourable East India Company are by us accepted, and will be scrupulously maintained, and we look for the like observance on their part.

"We desire no extension of our present territorial possessions; and while we will permit no aggression upon our dominions or our rights to be attempted with impunity, we shall sanction no encroachment on those of others. We shall respect the rights, dignity, and honour of Native Princes as our own; and we desire that they, as well as our own subjects, should enjoy that prosperity and that social advancement which can only be secured by internal peace and good government.

"We hold ourselves bound to the Natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects, and those obligations, by the blessing of Almighty God, we shall faithfully and conscientiously fill.

"...We declare it to be our royal will and pleasure that none be in any wise favoured, none molested or disquieted, by reason of their religious faith and observances, but that all shall alike enjoy the equal and impartial protection of the law; and we do strictly charge and enjoin all those who may be in authority under us that they abstain from all interference with the religious belief or worship of any of our subjects on pain of our highest displeasure.

"And it is our further will that, so far as may be, our subjects, of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially admitted to offices in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability, and integrity, duly to discharge".

The Queen approved and confirmed the offer of pardon by Lord Canning to the rebels and mutineers of 1857-8 and made a further announcement as follows:—

"Our clemency will be extended to all offenders, save and except those who have been, or shall be, convicted of having directly taken part in the murder of British subjects. With regard to such the demands of justice forbid the exercise of mercy.

"To those who have willingly given asylum to murderers, knowing them to be such, or who may have acted as leaders or instigators of revolt, their lives alone can be guaranteed; but, in apportioning the penalty due to such persons, full consideration will be given to the circumstances under which they have been induced to throw off their allegiance; and large indulgence will be shown to those whose crimes may appear to have originated in too credulous acceptance of the false reports circulated by designing men.

"To all others in arms against the Government we hereby promise unconditional pardon, amnesty, and oblivion of all offences against ourselves, our crown and dignity, on their return to their homes and peaceful pursuits.

"It is our royal pleasure that these terms of grace and amnesty should be extended to all those who comply with these conditions before the first day of January next".[8]

The exalted position of the British Crown in relation to the British Indian Empire was asserted by the exponents of New Imperialism in the post-1870 epoch. Thus the Government of Disraeli introduced in 1876 the Royal Titles Bill, which passed through Parliament with a large majority Following it, Queen Victoria was proclaimed 'Queen-Empress of India' at a *Durbar*, held at Delhi on the 1st January, 1877 Her successor, Edward VII, was proclaimed 'King-Emperor of India' at a second *Durbar*, held at Delhi on the 1st January, 1903. At a third Delhi *Durbar* in 1911, George V succeeded to this title which had come to be regarded as "the symbol of unity of the British Empire". More detailed reference will be made to these later.

3. *The Secretary of State.*

The Crown and the British Parliament exercised from 1858 their actual control over Indian affairs through the Secretary of State, whose salary was to be paid out of Indian revenues. He was to be one of the principal Secretaries of State of the British Government, a minister of the Cabinet rank, and a member of one or other house of the Parliament With the Secretary of State was associated a Council of India of fifteen members eight of whom were to be appointed by the Crown and seven were to be elected by the Court of Directors from among themselves Of these, more than a half in each case,—in all at least nine,—"shall be persons who shall have served or resided in India for ten years at the least, and ..shall not have last left India more than ten years next preceding the date of their appointment". Vacancies in Crown appointments were to be filled by the Crown, and vacancies among the seven other members would be filled by co-option The members of the Council were to hold office during their good behaviour, but they were removable "upon an address of both houses of Parliament". The Council had no initiative, but would only consider the questions referred to it by the Secretary of State, who could overrule the decisions of the majority, save and except in matters relating to expenditure and loans. Subject to these limitations, the Council was required to conduct, under the direction of the Secretary of State for India, "the business transacted in the United Kingdom in relation to the Government of India and the correspondence with India".

The Council was thus expected to exercise only a sort of "moral, control". Gradually the Secretary of State came to occupy a supreme position in relation to the Council, by controlling its composition, curtailment of its powers, and modification in the method of transacting business. The Government of India Act, 1869, authorized the Secretary of State to fill up all vacancies in the Council of India, and fixed the tenure of members of the Council appointed in future to a term of ten years. The Act also transferred to the Crown, from the Secretary of State in Council, the right of appointing the ordinary members of the Governor-General's Council, and of the members of Council of the several Presidencies in India. This legislation strengthened the position of the Secretary of State as against his Council, whose power was palpably reduced. Sir Charles Dilke rightly observed in the House of Commons: "At the time the Council was appointed, the idea was to curb the power of the Secretary of State; that feeling had passed away, and it was now recognised on all hands that the Council should be a consultative and not a controlling body".[9] By the Council of India Reduction Act of 1889, the Secretary of State was given the power to "abstain from filling vacancies until the number of members could be reduced to ten".

Clause 41 of the Act of 1858 gave to the Council the power of 'financial veto'. It provided that "the expenditure of the revenues of India, both in India and elsewhere, shall be subject to the control of the Secretary of State in Council, and no grant or appropriation of any part of such revenues, or of any other property coming into the possession of the Secretary of State in Council by virtue of this Act, shall be made without the concurrence of a majority of votes at a meeting of the Council". But this restraint became ineffective in actual practice, as, for matters of 'high policy', the Secretary of State was responsible to the Parliament and not to the Council, and he could issue secret orders concerning war or other matters involving heavy expenditure from Indian revenues, without the knowledge of his Council. Other conditions increased the subordination of the Council to the Secretary of State. He was not only given the powers of overruling the Council in case of difference of opinion, but also enjoyed some special privileges regarding matters of urgency and secrecy. He might not communicate to the Council the "secret" despatches from India, which were previously addressed to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors. Further, it was for the Secretary of State "to divide the Council into Committees for the more convenient transaction of business, and from time to time to re-arrange such Committees, and to direct

what departments of the business in relation to the Government of India under this Act (of 1858) shall be under such Committees respectively, and generally to direct the manner in which all such business shall be transacted".

In relation to the Government of India, also, the Secretary of State came to exercise unlimited authority in actual practice. It was thought in 1858 that the real executive power lay with the Government of India, and the Secretary of State was to 'direct and control' it.[9a] Northcote, however, some years later, characterized the Government as established in 1858 as "an executive machinery in India subject to controlling machinery in England". Bartle Frere held in the early sixties that the Secretary of State should act only as the "representative and colleague of the Viceroy in the Cabinet and Parliament, and as the exponent of the Viceroy's measures to the English Parliament and people".[10] In actual practice, however, the Secretary of State wielded much greater power.

Besides the special privileges of the Secretary of State, according to the legislative enactments, referred to above, certain other factors served to increase the influence of the Home Government and "to fortify the position of the Secretary of State *vis-à-vis* the Government of India". The completion of a direct telegraph line (by submarine cable by way of the Red Sea) between England and India in 1870 removed the difficulty and delay of communication. It made it easier for the Secretary of State to obtain quick information in relation to Indian affairs and he could no longer be "confronted with accomplished fact". He now sought to exercise greater control over the administration of India than had been the case before by keeping himself informed of all matters and by issuing detailed and positive orders.

The new development led to friction between the Secretary of State and the Government of India. In 1870 the Government of Lord Mayo protested "at being required to pass the Bills which became the Contract Act and the Evidence Act in the shape in which the Secretary of State, on the report of the Indian Law Commissioners, approved them, on the ground that such a course deprived the legislative councils of all liberty of action".[11] But the Home Government emphatically asserted their superior position in the following words:

"One great principle which from the beginning has underlaid the whole system (of the Government of India) is that the final control and direction of the affairs of India rest with the Home Government, and not with the authorities appointed and established by the Crown, under Parliamentary enactment, in India itself. The Government established in India is (from the nature of the case) subordinate to the Imperial Government at Home. And no Government can be subordinate, unless

it is within the power of the superior Government to order what is to be done or left undone, and to enforce on its officers, through the ordinary and constitutional means, obedience to its directions as to the use which they are to make of official position and power in furtherance of the policy which has been finally decided upon by the advisers of the Crown.

"Neither can I admit that it makes any real difference in the case if the directions issued by the Imperial Government relate to what may be termed legislative as distinguished from executive affairs. It may be quite as essential, in order to carry into effect the views of the Imperial Government, as to the well-being of Her Majesty's Indian dominions, that a certain measure should be passed into a law, as that a certain Act described in common language as executive, should be performed. But if it were indeed the case, as your argument would represent it to be, that the power of the Imperial Government were limited to the mere interposition of a veto on Acts passed in India, then the Government of the Queen, although it could resist the passing of an injurious law, would be helpless to secure legislative sanction for any measures, however essential it might deem them to be, for the welfare or safety of Her Indian Empire. I think that, on reconsideration, you will see how inadequate such a power would be to regulate and control the affairs of that Empire, and how small a part it would represent of that supreme and final authority which has always been held and exercised by the Government of the Crown."[11a]

Tension became acute during the Secretaryship of Lord Salisbury in the second ministry of Disraeli and the Viceroyalty of Lord Northbrook. While recognizing "the subordinate position of the Viceroy", Lord Northbrook "held that the Parliament had conferred certain rights, not only on the Viceroy, but on his Council, which differentiated the latter in a very notable degree from subordinate officials".[12] When Lord Northbrook wanted to assert the independence of the Government of India in relation to fiscal matters, Disraeli's Government strongly affirmed their constitutional rights in the following words:

"It is not open to question that Her Majesty's Government are as much responsible to Parliament for the Government of India as they are for any of the Crown Colonies of the Empire. It may even be said that the responsibility is more definite, in that the powers conferred are, in the case of India, armed with a more emphatic sanction. It necessarily follows that the control exercised by Her Majesty's Government over financial policy must be effective also."

The principle lying behind the assertion of such absolute rights was admirably summed up on this occasion in the words that followed:

"They cannot, of course, defend in debate measures of which they do not approve; nor can they disavow all concern in them, and throw the responsibility for them upon the distant Government of India. Full legal powers having been entrusted to Her Majesty's Government, Parliament would expect that care should be taken that no policy should be pursued which Her Majesty's Government were unable to defend. If the control they possess were to be in any respect less than complete, the power of Parliament over Indian questions would be necessarily annulled. If the Government were at liberty to assume the attitude of bystanders, and refer the House of Commons for explanations to the Governor-General in Council upon any policy that was assailed, there would practically be no one whom

the House could call to account, or through whom effect could be given to its decisions. In scrutinizing the control exercised over the Government of India by Her Majesty's Government, and the grounds for maintaining that control, it must be borne in mind that the superintending authority of Parliament is the reason and the measure of the authority exercised by the responsible Ministers of the Crown; and that, if the one power is limited the other must be limited at the same time".[13]

Lord Ripon, as the Viceroy of India, complained of the increasing interference of the India office. "I am not sure", he said, "that if I had known exactly how matters stood I would have come out here (India)".[14] The supremacy of the British Parliament over the Government of India and the indivisible responsibility of the British Cabinet were strongly asserted in 1894 by Sir Henry Fowler, the Secretary of State, during the debate on the Cotton Duties Bill. It should be noted that the "relations between Simla and Whitehall" varied much with "the personal equation". A strong man like Lord Curzon ascribed to the members of the Council of India "a desire to thwart and hinder his work", and he resigned in consequence of difference with the Home Government and the Secretary of State.

4 *The Parliament*

Though the supremacy of the British Parliament in the administration of India was theoretically asserted, as noted above, the actual powers of the Parliament were exercised by the Secretary of State for India. In accordance with the well-known principles of British constitution, the Secretary of State was fully responsible to the Parliament But, as was pointed out by Macaulay in 1833, it was impossible, in the very nature of circumstances, that the actions of the Secretary of State for India should form a subject of scrutiny either by the Parliament or by the British people, to the same extent as those of the other Secretaries. The British Parliament has therefore been aptly described as "a sleepy guardian of Indian interests".

The following extract from the Montagu-Chelmsford Report shows how the Parliament actually exercised control over Indian affairs:

"The bulk of Indian legislation it leaves to the Indian legislatures which it has itself created, though it exercises through the Secretary of State complete control over the character of such law-making. But it insists that decisions on certain important matters, such as rules for the nomination or election of additional members of council, or for appointments to the Indian Civil Service, or defining the qualifications for persons to be appointed to listed posts, or notifications setting up executive councils for lieutenant-governors shall be laid before it. Nor are Indian revenue and expenditure controlled by Parliament. The revenues apart from loans are not raised, nor are the charges except for military expenditure beyond the frontiers incurred with its direct approval. The Home expenditure is met from Indian revenues and therefore the salaries of the Secretary of State and his office are not included in the estimates. A motion in favour of placing these amounts on the

estimates was made in 1906, and defeated by a large majority, on the ground that the change would tend to bring the Indian administration into party politics. Accordingly all that at present happens is that a detailed account of receipts and charges is annually laid before Parliament together with a report, the quality of which has incurred some criticism, upon the moral and material progress of the country. A motion is made that Mr. Speaker do leave the chair for the House to go into Committee on the East Indian revenue accounts; the actual motion made in Committee is declaratory and formal; a general debate on Indian affairs is in order, and the Secretary or Under Secretary of State usually takes this opportunity to inform the House about any important matters of administration. All sums expended in England on behalf of India are also examined by an auditor who lays his report before both Houses. Because Parliament does not vote the revenues of India, it has not the same opportunity of exercising the control over its administration as over the great departments of the public service in Great Britain. It is, of course, true that when any matter of Indian administration attracts public interest, Parliament has the ordinary and perfectly effective means of making its opinion felt, by questions, by amendments to the address, by motions to adjourn, by resolutions or by motions of no confidence. We have no hesitation in saying, however, that the interest shown by Parliament in Indian affairs has not been well-sustained or well-informed. It has tended to concern itself chiefly with a few subjects, such as the methods of dealing with political agitation, the opium trade, or the cotton excise duties. It may be well to record that in India such spasmodic interferences are apt to be attributed to political exigencies at Home. We note that Her Majesty's Ministers did not feel it necessary to give effect to resolutions of the House of Commons on the opium trade in 1889 and 1891, nor about simultaneous examinations in India and England for the Indian Civil Service in 1893, because they felt assured that the House would not on reflexion constrain them to carry out measures which on inquiry proved to be open to objection. No one questions the competence of Parliament to interfere as drastically or as often as it chooses. Our point, however, is that it does not make a custom of interfering".

The chief defect of this system is also pointed out in the same report.

"We have seen how in the days of the Company it was Parliament's habit before renewing the Charter to hold a regular inquest into Indian administration. That practice has lapsed since 1858. Indeed we have the paradox that Parliament ceased to assert control at the very moment when it had acquired it. It cannot be said that Royal Commissions on particular subjects, for example, those over which Sir Charles Hobhouse and Lord Islington presided, are an adequate substitute for the old procedure'.[14]

But although the British Parliament did not normally take any interest in Indian affiars, it often took too much interest if those affairs touched in any way the interests of Britain. In such circumstances the Secretary of State who, as a member of the Cabinet, had to accept the views of the Parliament, put undue pressure on his Council and the Government of India. The whole situation is very pithily put by Ramsay Macdonald, a former British Prime Minister, as follows:

"The intention of Parliament in 1858 was apparently to give the power of initiative to the Government of India, that of examination and revision to the Secretary

of State's Council, that of veto to the Secretary himself. But that did not suit a Home Cabinet, which had views of its own on certain Indian affairs, especially economic ones, and in 1870 the Duke of Argyll, in correspondence with Lord Mayo, the Viceroy, issued an order that the Government of India was part of the Home Executive and subordinate to the Cabinet, and that official members and the Viceroy should take instructions from home. This point was raised later on by Lord Salisbury when he insisted upon being consulted on all legislative proposals of importance; and when, in 1875, the Government of India passed a Tariff Bill imposing duties upon cotton, angry correspondence followed, and Lord Salisbury issued his order that the duty would have to be removed as quickly as possible. Upon this the Viceroy resigned. It has also been laid down by a Secretary of State that the Council (of Secretary of State) can be independent in its criticism only so long as the Cabinet allows it.[16]

II. THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

1. *The Governor-General and his Council*

The Act of 1858 did not introduce any formal change in the constitution and the general framework of the Government of India. The Governor-General had no doubt the added dignity of a personal representative of the Crown, but though this was always emphasized by the additional title of Viceroy, it did not practically make any difference in his position. As before, the office, though practically reserved for the British aristocracy, was technically open to professional administrator, as demonstrated by the appointment of Sir John Lawrence. Of course, the replacement of dual control at Home by the absolute control of the Secretary of State introduced the element of party politics in the appointment of the Governor-General in a much more striking manner than before. But although selected as a party man, the Governor-General, once appointed, ceased to be so, and did not resign with the fall of his party from power. As a rule, he was appointed for five years, and held his office for the whole of the period, irrespective of any change in Home politics. There are, however, instances, though very rare, of a Governor-General resigning his office for difference of opinion with the Home Government, as well as of the extension of the usual period of his office. He could not go home on leave during his tenure of office.

The constitution of the Executive Council of the Governor-General was not changed in any way by the Act of 1858. It still consisted of four ordinary members (of whom three were senior covenanted servants of the Company, and one, the Law Member, a barrister) with the Commander-in-Chief as an extraordinary member. A proposal was made in 1860 to abolish the Council, the idea being to vest the Government of India solely in the person of the Viceroy and reduce the members of the Council to the status of

Secretaries. This proposal was not ultimately acted upon. Instead, the Act of 1861 added one more member to the Council, raising the total number to five, and authorized the Governor-General to make rules for the conduct of business.

Lord Canning had already introduced very important changes in the existing method of transacting business. Instead of the collective deliberation of all the members through the exchange of notes and minutes, Canning had already introduced the portfolio system in 1859, when a special Finance Member was appointed. Under this system the business of one or more departments was assigned to a particular member. The rules made by Canning under the Act of 1861 completed the system which in its general framework continued till the end of the British period. This method has been described as follows:

"The member and the secretary of a department are empowered to settle all minor business on their own authority; and thus other members, and the Council as a whole, are relieved of all the petty cases which formerly choked the progress of public business. Once every week each member has a regular meeting with the Viceroy, at which the more important matters are discussed, and either settled or referred for discussion to a full Council. In order to make sure that important questions are not being settled in the department without reference to the Viceroy, each secretary also has a weekly interview, in which he has the right of bringing forward any case which he considers demands the Viceroy's attention. This has an ugly appearance of going behind the member's back; the intention is, however, to give the Viceroy the opportunity of hearing the views of two experts, and not leaving him more or less at the mercy of a single one."

"The great bulk of Government business is then settled either in the department concerned, or by the member in consultation with the Viceroy. There is, however, a residuum of cases that cannot thus be disposed of—either matters of general policy which the Viceroy wishes to be discussed in Council, or cases which he refers to the Council at the request of a member whom he has overruled. The Executive Council is usually stated to meet thus as a Cabinet once a week. At such meetings the decision of the majority prevails, unless the Viceroy decides to overrule his Council by the use of those powers which he has inherited from Lord Cornwallis. But these powers have been used very seldom since the Mutiny".[3]

The new method facilitated business, and enabled the Government of India to cope with the steadily growing volume of work. But there is no doubt that it considerably increased the power of the Governor-General, and reduced the importance of the Council, as such, as a ruling body in the scheme of the Government of India. Henceforth all the powers were gradually centred in the Viceroy and Governor-General, and his Council only played a subsidiary role.

Several other circumstances contributed to the same result. One of these was the reduction of the pay of a member of the Governor-General's Council to £ 8,000 and increase of that of the Lieutenant-

Governor to £10,000 a year. This had a twofold effect. The members of the Council naturally looked forward to the prize-post of a Lieutenant-Governorship and—not to put it more bluntly—became more amenable to the views of the Governor-General in whose hands the appointment lay. Secondly, by appointing his active supporters as heads of provinces, the Governor-General established his control over those who directly administered the provinces of India. As Minto put it, it is the Provincial rulers and not the Councillors of India who were the chief officers of the Viceroy.

Another circumstance which weakened the Governor-General's Council was the growing practice of private communications between the Viceroy and the Secretary of State. The result was that many important questions of policy were settled behind the back of the Council. But this had also the effect of reducing, to a large degree, the independence of judgment and freedom of action which the Viceroy exercised before. This process set in in 1870 when the telegraphic communication was established between India and England Formerly, on account of the long delay in communication, the Governor-General had to take action in emergencies without the sanction of the Home Government, which was often faced with a *fait accompli*. A great deal of initiative and freedom of action was thus necessarily left with the Government of India. But all this was changed when a consultation with the Home Government on every matter was feasible and therefore insisted upon. But as often happens, the pendulum swung to the opposite extreme. The tendency gradually grew for the British Cabinet to treat the Government of India as merely a subordinate branch of the British Government Not unoften, it went one step further, when the Secretary of State for India proceeded to decide upon important questions of policy by private discussion with the Viceroy alone, ignoring altogether the Council of India.

The development of this process can be clearly traced to the days when Lord Salisbury and Lord Northbrook held, respectively, the offices of the Secretary of State for India and the Viceroy. This would be evident from the following passage in a memorandum written by Northbrook's cousin and Private Secretary, Major Baring (afterwards Lord Cromer): "There can be no doubt", he says, "that Lord Salisbury's idea was to conduct the Government of India to a very large extent by private correspondence between the Secretary of State and the Viceroy. He was disposed to neglect, and I think to underrate, the value of the views of the Anglo-Indian officials...This idea inevitably tended to bring the Viceroy into the same relation with the Secretary of State for India as that in which

an Ambassador or Minister at a foreign court stands to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs..."[18]

Side by side with the decline of power, the members of the Governor-General's Council lost their independence of action and could be required to cast their vote, not as they thought proper, but as directed by the Imperial Government at Home. This was clearly enunciated as follows in course of the rebuke which the Home Government administered to Lord Mayo, as stated above.[19]

"The Imperial Government cannot indeed insist on all the members of the Governor General's Council, when assembled for legislative purposes, voting for any measure which may be proposed, because on such occasions some members are present who are not members of the Government and not official servants of the Crown. But the Act which added these members to the Council for a particular purpose made no change in the relations which subsist between the Imperial Government and its own executive officers. That Government must hold in its hands the ultimate power of requiring the Governor General to introduce a measure, and of requiring also all the members of his Government to vote for it".[20]

The debate on the cotton duties in 1894 was the last occasion on which the issue was raised. Sir Henry Fowler then laid down, as follows, the principle, that the united and indivisible responsibility of the Cabinet, which was recognised as the only basis on which the government of the United Kingdom could be carried on, applied to the Indian executive councils in spite of the different nature of the tie which held its members together:

"It should be understood that this principle, which guides the Imperial Cabinet, applies equally to administrative and to legislative action; if in either case a difference has arisen, members of the Government of India are bound, after recording their opinions, if they think fit to do so, for the information of the Secretary of State in the manner prescribed by the Act either to act with the Government or to place their resignations in the hands of the Viceroy. It is moreover immaterial for the present purpose what may be the nature of the considerations which have determined the Government of India to introduce a particular measure. In any case, the policy adopted is the policy of the Government as a whole, and as such, must be accepted and promoted by all who decide to remain members of that Government".[21]

The same principle was also applied to the members of the Governor's Executive Council. "When in 1878 a member of the Madras executive council moved an amendment which had been rejected by the Government of India, to a Bill that was before the provincial legislative council, the Secretary of State declared that his action was constitutionally improper".[22]

2. *The Indian Councils Act, 1861.*

The first important change in the structure of the Government of India was made by the Act of 1861. It was intended in the first place to remove what was regarded by the authorities as the de-

fects in the Act of 1853. The first of these, already noted above,[23] was the undue interference by the Legislative Council, set up by that Act, with the executive branch of the administration, which was never intended to be the function of that body. In the second place, both Madras and Bombay chafed at the loss of their legislative power, and differences had already arisen between the Supreme Government and the Government of Madras about the Income-Tax Bill. There was, indeed, a strong reaction in both these provinces against the centralisation in Calcutta.

But there were other more deep-seated reasons which moved the British Government. The Mutiny and rebellion of 1857, the Santal rebellion of 1855-57, and the Indigo riots of 1860,—all seemed to indicate that there was something wrong in the administrative system. The growing ill feeling, bordering on antagonism, between the Indians and the Englishmen in India, was considered by Sir Charles Wood "as the most alarming symptom" tending "to increase the dangers of our position" to which "it would be folly to shut our eyes".

Sir Charles Wood also believed that

> "many of the greatest mistakes into which we have been led have arisen from the circumstance that we have been, not unnaturally, perhaps, for arranging everything according to English ideas In Bengal we converted the collectors of taxes into the permanent landowners of the country, and left the ryots to their mercy. In Madras, Sir Thomas Munro, from most benevolent motives, and to avoid the evils of the Bengal settlement, introduced the ryotwary system It is now asserted that a more impoverished population than that of Madras does not exist" [24]

There was a general feeling that all these evils were mainly due to the absence of Indians in the Legislative Councils of India. Sir Syed Ahmad wrote a book in Urdu, entitled *Essay on the causes of the Indian Revolt*, almost immediately after the Mutiny. He regarded the non-admission of the Indians into the Legislative Council of India as the primary cause of the rebellion In support of this view, he observed:

> "Most men, I believe, agree in thinking that it is highly conducive to the welfare and prosperity of Government—indeed it is essential to its stability—that the people should have a voice in its councils. It is from the voice of the people only that Government can learn whether its projects are likely to be well received. The voice of the people alone can check the error in the bud, and warn us of dangers before they burst upon and destroy us....This voice can never be heard, and this security never acquired, unless the people are allowed a share in the consultations of the Government. The men who have ruled India should never have forgotten that they were here in the position of foreigners. ..The evils which resulted to India from the non-admission of natives into the Legislative Council of India were various. Government could never know the inadvisability of any of the laws and regulations which it passed It could never hear, as it ought to have heard, the voice of the people on such a subject. The people had no means of protesting

against what they might feel to be a foolish measure, or giving public expression of their own wishes. But the greatest mischief lay in this, that the people misunderstood the views and intentions of Government".[25]

Some Englishmen also shared the views of Syed Ahmad and pointed out the dangers arising from the entire exclusion of Indians from association with the legislation of the country. Sir Bartle Frere observed in a Minute written in 1860:

"The addition of a native element has, I think, become necessary owing to our diminished opportunities of learning through indirect channels what the natives think of our measures, and how the native community will be affected by them.... No one will I think object to the only obvious means of regaining in part the advantages which we have lost, unless he is prepared for the perilous experiment of continuing to legislate for millions of people, with few means of knowing, except by a rebellion, whether the laws suit them or not".[25a]

That Sir Charles Wood, the Secretary of State for India, was influenced by this view is clear from the remarks quoted above, which he made while introducing the Bill.

Thus the Indian Councils Act of 1861 was passed largely as a measure of caution against future danger. According to this Act the number of ordinary members of the Governor-General's Council was raised to five. For purposes of legislation, the Governor-General's Council was reinforced by additional members, not less than six nor more than twelve in number, nominated by the Governor-General and holding office for two years. Not less than half of these members were to be non-officials. The Commander-in-Chief, and the Governor or Lieutenant-Governor of the Province where the Council assembled were extra-ordinary members of the Council

The Legislative Council established under the Act of 1853 had come to regard itself as something like a Parliament for India, and put the Executive Government to considerable inconvenience by asking questions about, and discussing, its measures. In order to put a stop to all this, "the functions of the new Legislative Council were limited strictly to legislation, and it was expressly forbidden to transact any business except the consideration and enactment of legislative measures, or to entertain any motion except a motion for leave to introduce a Bill, or having reference to a Bill actually introduced".[26] Legislation on certain specified matters could not be introduced without the previous sanction of the Governor-General. No Act passed by the Legislative Council would be valid unless it had received the assent of the Governor-General, and any such Act might be disallowed by the Crown, acting through the Secretary of State.

The Governor-General in Council, constituted for legislative business, was to have power to make laws and regulations for amending or repealing any laws in force in the "Indian territories now

under the dominion of Her Majesty", and to make laws for "all persons, whether British or Native, foreigners or others, and for all courts of justice whatever, and for all places and things whatever within the said territories, and for all servants of the Government of India within the dominions of Princes and States in alliance with Her Majesty". The Governor-General was to have the power, in cases of emergency, to pass, without his Council, Ordinances which would be valid for not more than six months. The Governments of Madras and Bombay got back the power of legislation which had been withdrawn by the Act of 1833. The Councils of the Governors of Bombay and Madras were expanded for legislative purposes by the addition of the Advocate-General and other persons not less than four, nor more than eight, to be nominated by the Governors. "The previous sanction of the Governor-General was made requisite for legislation by the local legislature in certain cases, and all Acts of the local legislature required the subsequent assent of the Governor-General in addition to that of the Secretary of State, and were, of course, made subject to disallowance by the Crown. Further, the "power of local legislation bestowed by the Act of 1861 was not, as previously, exclusive: it was concurrent, so that, while a provincial Council might, with the Governor-General's approval, legislate for its own area, the legislative power of the Governor-General in Council was unimpaired and extended for all purposes over the whole of the Indian territories under the British Crown. The concentration of authority at the centre thus persisted".[27] The Governor-General was also directed to establish a legislative council for Bengal and empowered to establish similar councils for the North-Western Provinces and the Panjāb.

The Act of 1861, for the first time, made it possible for the Indians to take some share in the administration of their own country. This share was, however, strictly limited to giving advice on proposed legislation. The Legislative Councils established under that Act were merely "committees for the purpose of making laws", and these laws were in reality the orders of Government. There was however one important difference. The laws were made in a manner which ensured publicity and discussion and were enforced by the courts and not by the executive.

But in some respects the Act of 1861 was of a retrograde character. The Council set up by the Act of 1853 had introduced parliamentary procedure, and by asking questions and discussing executive measures including the budget, marked a definite stage in the progress of representative Government in India. All these powers were taken away by the Act of 1861, and from the Indian point of

view it was a definite set-back in the constitutional progress of India for which the English-educated Indians were already making demands. The Home Government made it clear that they could not contemplate anything like a representative council or responsible government for India. Sir Charles Wood, while introducing the Bill of 1861, very frankly observed: "You cannot possibly assemble at any one place in India persons who shall be the real representatives of the various classes of the Native population of that empire...... To talk of Native representation is therefore to talk of that which is simply and utterly impossible".[28]

Thus began the formulation of the doctrine that the Parliamentary form of Government was unsuitable for India,—a doctrine which grew into an axiomatic truth and was repeated like parrots by all subsequent Secretaries of State for more than fifty years. Sir Charles Wood very clearly enunciated another maxim when he stated: "All experience teaches us that where a dominant race rules another, the mildest form of Government is a despotism".[29] His successors believed in this abstract doctrine, bereft of its context, as strongly as he, but most of them never admitted it so frankly, and tried to camouflage this unpalatable truth in various ways.

Another retrograde feature of the Act of 1861 was to empower the Governor-General to issue Ordinances which would have the force of law for six months. It marks the forging of a new repressive weapon which the British Government in India carefully preserved in its armoury till the very last moment.

3. *Legislation between 1861 and 1891.*

There was not much change in the structure of the Government of India or its powers between 1861 and 1891. But a few important points may be noted.

"The Government of India Act of 1865 extended the legislative powers of the Governor-General's Council to all British subjects in Native States, whether servants of the Crown or not; the Indian Councils Act of 1869 still further extended these powers by enabling the Governor-General's Council to make laws for all native Indian subjects of the Crown in any part of the world, whether in India or not. Incidentally, it may be added that the Act of 1865 also enabled the Governor-General's Council to define and alter, by proclamations, the territorial limits of the various Presidencies and Lieutenant-Governorships.

"An Act of 1873 formally dissolved the East India Company as from January 1, 1874. In the following year another Indian Coun-

cils Act enabled a sixth member of the Governor-General's Council to be appointed for Public Works purposes. The Indian Councils Act of 1904, however, removed the necessity for appointing the sixth member specifically for Public Works purposes, though it continued the power to appoint a sixth member".[30]

The most important Act passed during the period which had a great significance in Indian history was the Royal Titles Act of 1876. "It authorised the Queen, by Royal Proclamation, to make such addition to the style and titles appertaining to the Imperial Crown of the United Kingdom and its dependencies as to Her Majesty might seem meet. Accordingly, the Queen, by Proclamation dated April 28, 1876, added to her style and titles the words 'INDIAE IMPERATRIX' or 'EMPRESS OF INDIA'. The translation of the new title in the vernacular was a matter for careful consideration with Lord Lytton's Government who finally decided to adopt the term KAISER-I-HIND. It was short, sonorous, expressive of the Imperial character which it was intended to convey, and a title, moreover, of classical antiquity".[31]

The credit for this measure must go to the two great imperialist politicians of Britain, namely Disraeli, the Prime Minister, and his worthy lieutenant, Lord Lytton, the Viceroy of India. The genesis of the whole conception is thus described by the latter's daughter, Lady Betty Balfour·

"When the administration of India was transferred from the East India Company to the sovereign, it seemed in the eyes of her Indian subjects and feudatories that the impersonal power of an administrative abstraction had been replaced by the direct personal authority of a human being. This was a change thoroughly congenial to all their traditional sentiments, but without some appropriate title the Queen of England was scarcely less of an abstraction than the Company itself. The title of Empress or Badshah could alone adequately represent her relations with the states and kingdoms of India, and was moreover a title familiar to the natives of the country, and an impressive and significant one in their eyes.

"Embarrassments inseparable from the want of some appropriate title had long been experienced with increasing force by successive Indian administrators, and were brought, as it were, to a crisis by various circumstances incidental to the Prince of Wales's visit to India in 1875-76, and by a recommendation of Lord Northbrook's Government that it would be in accordance with fact, with the language of political documents and with that in ordinary use to speak of Her Majesty as the Sovereign of India—that is to say, the paramount power over all, including Native States.

"It was accordingly announced in the speech from the Throne in the session of 1876, that whereas when the direct Government of the Indian Empire was assumed by the Queen no formal addition was made to the style and titles of the Sovereign, Her Majesty deemed that moment a fitting one for supplying the omission, and of giving thereby a formal and emphatic expression of the favourable sentiments which she had always entertained towards the princes and people of India".[32]

4. *The Act of 1892*

During the thirty years that followed the passing of the Act of 1861 momentous changes had taken place among the Indians by way of the growth of nationalism, awakening of political consciousness, and development of political organizations. As will be related in a subsequent chapter, all these received a great impetus during the seventies and eighties and culminated in the foundation of the Indian National Congress in 1885.

Ever since the beginning of political consciousness among the English-educated Indians, during the thirties and forties, they had been demanding a greater share in the administration of their country, and political organizations like the British Indian Association put forth concrete proposals for representative councils. They were sadly disappointed when the Act of 1861 was passed, for it did not give any real power or even voice to the Indians in the administration of their country.

The actual work of the Councils under the Act of 1861 showed their real character. The Indian members of the Councils were all nominated, and, with a few honourable exceptions, they were "magnificent nonentities". Their constituency was the Government House and they were true to it [32a] A lurid picture of such a nominated member was drawn by Mr. MacNeill in the British House of Commons. "A Maharaj of the North-West Provinces," he said, "was appointed a member of the Supreme Council, and he could not speak a word of English, and was not allowed to have an interpreter. After the meeting a relative asked him how he got on. The reply was, 'At first I found it very difficult, but then there was the Governor-General who elected me, and when he raised his hand I raised mine, and when he put his hand down I put down mine".[33]

Another liberal British statesman, Sir Henry Cotton, made the following comments in his book *"New India"*:

"The constitution of these Councils has lately attracted much attention in the native Press, and I sincerely trust that public opinion will not cease to express itself on the subject until some radical and thorough reform has been effected. It is not too much to say that the present constitution of the Legislative Council is the merest farce. Not only do officials predominate to an extent which absolutely precludes the possibility of any independent action, but these officials consist almost entirely of individuals who, from the very position they hold, are unable to display any personal independence. The present members of the Council are little more than puppets. A native Deputy Magistrate is not inclined to offer advice unacceptable to a Lt. Governor to whom he owes the honour of his appointment, and on whom he depends for his prospects in the service. The excellent and faithful agents of the rich and Zamindars, who now enjoy a seat in the Bengal Council, would as soon bite off their tongues as place themselves in opposition to Sir Rivers Thompson. No blame to them. They act in accordance

with the antecedent of their own order, and of their fellow countrymen of the old style. The very essence of their creed is subservience to authority. Is there one among their friends and associates who would justify their action if they were to place themselves in opposition?"

No wonder, then, that the Councils set up by the Act of 1861 did not at all satisfy the aspirations of the politically minded Indians whose number was steadily growing with the spread of English education. A member of the Congress described the Councils as gilded shams.[33a] As will be related later, new political organizations of a more popular character like the "Indian Association" in Calcutta, the *Sarbajanik Sabha* of Poona (Bombay), National Conference in Calcutta, and finally the Indian National Congress never ceased to press upon the Government the demand for representative councils.

From its very inception the Indian National Congress urged upon the Government, among other things, the extension and enlargement of legislatures, and the constitution of the same on elective principles. The circular that was issued inviting persons to attend the first session of the Indian National Congress expressed the hope that "indirectly this Conference will form the germ of a native Parliament". The following resolution was passed at the very first session of the Congress at Bombay in 1885.[34]

"That this Congress considers the reform and expansion of the Supreme and existing Local Legislative Councils, by the admission of a considerable proportion of elected members (and the creation of similar Councils for the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, and also for the Punjab) essential, and holds that all Budgets should be referred to these Councils for consideration, their members being moreover empowered to interpellate the Executive in regard to all branches of the administration, and that a Standing Committee of the House of Commons should be constituted to receive and consider any formal protests that may be recorded by majorities of such Councils against the exercise by the Executive of the power, which would be vested in it, of overruling the decisions of such majorities".

In the second session (1886) the Congress laid down certain definite principles for giving practical effect to the above.

"(a). The number of persons composing the Legislative Councils, both Provincial and of the Governor-General, to be materially increased. Not less than one-half of the Members of such enlarged Councils to be elected. Not more than one-fourth to be officials having seats ex-officio in such Councils and not more than one-fourth to be members, official or non-official, nominated by Government.

(b). The right to elect members to the Provincial Councils to be conferred only on those classes and members of the community, *prima facie* capable of exercising it wisely and independently. In Bengal and Bombay, the councillors may be elected by the members of Municipalities, District Boards, Chambers of Commerce and the Universities, or an electorate may be constituted of all persons possessing such qualifications, educational and pecuniary, as may be deemed necessary. In Madras, the Councillors may be elected either by District Boards, Municipalities, Chambers of Commerce and the University or by electoral Colleges composed of members partly elected by these bodies and partly nominated by Government. In the North-

West Provinces and Oudh and in the Punjab, councillors may be elected by an electoral College composed of members, elected by Municipal and District Boards, and nominated, to an extent not exceeding one-sixth of the total number, by Government, it being understood that the same elective system now in force where Municipal Boards are concerned will be applied to District Boards and the right of electing members to the latter extended to the cultivating class. But whatever system be adopted, (and the details must be worked out separately for each province), care must be taken that all sections of the community and all great interests are adequately represented.

(c). The elected members of the Council of the Governor-General for making laws, to be elected by the elected members of the several Provincial Councils.

(d). No elected or nominated member of any Council to receive any salary or remuneration in virtue of such membership, but any such member, already in receipt of any Government salary or allowance, to continue to draw the same unchanged during membership, and all members to be entitled to be reimbursed any expenses incurred in travelling in connection with their membership.

(e). All persons resident in India to be eligle for seats in Council, whether as electees or nominees, without distinction of race, creed, caste or colour.

(f). All legislative measures and all financial questions including all budgets, whether these involve new or enhanced taxation or not, to be necessarily submitted to and dealt with by these Councils. In the case of all other branches of the administration any member to be at liberty, after due notice, to put any question he sees fit to the ex-officio Members (or such one of these as may be especially charged with the supervision of the particular branch concerned) and to be entitled (except as hereinafter provided) to receive a reply to his question together with copies of any paper requisite for the thorough comprehension of the subject, and on this reply the Council to be at liberty to consider and discuss the question and record thereon such Resolution as may appear fitting to the majority. Provided that if the subject in regard to which the inquiry is made involves matters of Foreign policy, Military dispositions or strategy, or is otherwise of such a nature that in the opinion of the Executive, the public interests would be materially imperilled by the communication of the information asked for, it shall be competent for them to instruct the ex-officio Members or one of them, to reply accordingly and decline to furnish the information asked for.

(g) The Executive Government, shall possess the power of overruling the decision arrived at by the majority of the Council, in every case in which in its opinion the public interest would suffer by the acceptance of such decision; but whenever this power is exercised, a full exposition of the grounds on which this has been considered necessary, shall be published within one month and in the case of Local Governments, they shall report the circumstances and explain their action to the Government of India, and in the case of this latter, it shall report and explain to the Secretary of State; and in any such case on a representation made through the Government of India and the Secretary of State by the over-ruled majority, it shall be competent to the Standing Committee of the House of Commons (recommended in the third resolution of last year's Congress, which this present Congress has affirmed) to consider the matter, and call for any and all papers or information, and hear any persons on behalf of such majority or otherwise, and thereafter, if needful, report thereon to the full House."

As will be described later, Mr. A. O. Hume, who first formulated the scheme of Indian National Congress, was not satisfied by mere-

ly passing Resolutions and in 1888 started a mass movement on the lines of the Anti-Corn-Law agitation in England. The Government of India realized the importance of the Indian movement and could not remain altogether indifferent to the consistent demand. Lord Dufferin, who was at first sympathetic to the political aspirations of India and played an important role in the foundation of the Indian National Congress, wrote in 1886: "My own inclination would be to examine carefully and seriously the demands which are the outcome of these various movements; to give quickly and with good grace whatever it may be possible or desirable to accord; to announce that the concessions must be accepted as a final settlement of the Indian system for the next ten or fifteen years; and to forbid mass meetings and incendiary speechifying...Among the natives I have met there are a considerable number who are both able and sensible, and upon whose loyal co-operation one could undoubtedly rely. The fact of their supporting the Government would popularize many of its acts which now have the appearance of being driven through the legislature by force; and if they in their turn had a native party behind them, the Government of India would cease to stand up, as it does now, an isolated rock in the middle of a tempestuous sea, around whose base the breakers dash themselves simultaneously from all the four quarters of heaven".[77] Lord Dufferin appointed a committee for the purpose of suggesting concrete proposals of reform. The Committee's report contained proposals for changing the character of the councils and enlarging their power.

"They recommended for example that the councils should see papers freely and originate advice or suggestions; that debates on such advice or suggestions should be permitted, and that the estimates connected with local finance should be referred to a standing committee and debated if necessary in council. They also were concerned to bring into public affairs the gentry and nobility of the country; and for this purpose they devised a council which should consist of two orders or divisions both containing some official members. They made the radical suggestion that election should be introduced as far as possible—in the first division directly, on a high property qualification, and in the second division indirectly, by local bodies and the universities. They advised that care should be taken to secure the fair representation of all classes; that power should be reserved to Government to pass measures in certain cases against votes of a majority in council; and that councils should be of moderate size and not more than two-fifths elected."[78]

After perusing this report Dufferin formulated a definite view and elaborated a concrete scheme to give effect to it. This was summed up by himself in the following words which also give a very brilliant exposition of the British standpoint in regard to the constitutional advance of India.

"It now appears to my colleagues and to myself that the time has come for us to take another step in the development of the same liberal policy, and to

give, to quote my own words, 'a still wider share in the administration of public affairs to such Indian gentlemen as by their influence, their acquirements, and the confidence they inspire in their fellow-countrymen are marked out as fitted to assist with their counsels the responsible rulers of the country'. But it is necessary that there would be no mistake as to the nature of our aims or of the real direction in which we propose to move. Our scheme may be briefly described as a plan for the enlargement of our provincial councils, for the enhancement of their status, the multiplication of their functions, the partial introduction into them of the elective principle, and the liberalization of their general character as political institutions. From this it might be concluded that we were contemplating an approach, at all events as far as the provinces are concerned, to English parliamentary government, and an English constitutional system. Such a conclusion would be very wide of the mark, and it would be wrong to leave either the India Office or the Indian public under so erroneous an impression. India is an integral portion, and it may be said one of the most important portions of the mighty British Empire. Its destinies have been confided to the guidance of an allien race, whose function is to arbitrate between a multitude of conflicting or antagonistic interests, and its government is conducted in the name of a monarch whose throne is in England. The executive that represents her *imperium* in India is an executive directly responsible, not to any local authority, but to the Sovereign and to the British Parliament. Nor could its members divest themselves of this responsibility as long as Great Britain remains the paramount administrative power in India. But it is of the essence of constitutional government, as Englishmen understand the term, that no administration should remain at the head of affairs which does not possess the necessary powers to carry out whatever measures or policy it may consider to be 'for the public interest.' The moment these powers are withheld, either by the Sovereign or Parliament, a constitutional executive resigns its functions and gives way to those whose superior influence with the constituencies has enabled them to overrule its decisions, and who consequently become answerable for whatever line of procedure may be adopted in lieu of that recommended by their predecessors. In India this shifting of responsibility from one set of persons to another is, under existing circumstances, impossible; for if any measure introduced into a legislative council is vetoed by an adverse majority, the Governor cannot call upon the dissentients to take the place of his own official advisers, who are nominated by the Queen-Empress on the advice of the Secretary of State. Consequently the vote of the opposition in an Indian Council would not be given under the heavy sense of responsibility which attaches to the vote of a dissenting majority in a constitutional country; while no responsible executive could be required to carry on the government unless free to inaugurate whatever measures it considers necessary for the good and safety of the State. It is, therefore, obvious, for this and many other reasons, that, no matter to what degree the liberalization of the councils may now take place, it will be necessary to leave in the hands of each provincial Government the ultimate decision upon all important questions, and the paramount control of its own policy. It is in this view that we have arranged that the nominated members in the Council should outnumber the elected members, at the same time that the Governor has been empowered to overrule his council whenever he feels himself called upon by circumstances to do so

"But, though it is out of the question either for the supreme or for the subordinate Governments of India to divest themselves of any essential portion of that Imperial authority which is necessary to their very existence as the ruling power, paramount over a variety of nationalities, most of whom are in a

very backward state of civilization and enlightenment, there is no reason why they should not desire to associate with themselves in council in very considerable numbers such of the natives of India as may be enabled by their acquirements, experience, and ability to assist and enlighten them in the discharge of their difficult duties. Nor can it be doubted that these gentlemen, when endowed with ample and unrestricted powers of criticism, suggestion, remonstrance and inquiry will be in a position to exercise a very powerful and useful influence over the conduct of provincial and local public business which alone it is proposed to entrust to them. As inhabitants of the country, as intimately associated with its urban and rural interests, as being in continual contact with large masses of their fellow-countrymen, as the acknowledged representatives of legally constituted bodies, or chosen from amongst influential classes, they will always speak with great weight of authority; and as their utterances will take place in public, their opinions will be sure to receive at the hands of the press whatever amount of support their intrinsic weight or value may justify. By this means the field of public discussion will be considerably enlarged, and the various administrations concerned will be able to shape their course with the advantage of a far more distinct knowledge of the wishes and feelings of the communities with whose interests they may be required to deal than has hitherto been the case—for those wishes and feelings will be expressed, not as at present, through self-constituted, self-nominated, and therefore untrustworthy, channels, but by the mouths of those who will be the legally constituted representatives of various interests and classes, and who will feel themselves, in whatever they do or say, responsible to enlightened and increasing sections of their own countrymen."

"All that the Government hoped to do, he added, was by associating with them in the task of administration a considerable number of persons 'selected and elected' from the educated classes to place themselves in contact with a larger surface of Indian opinion, and thus to multiply the channels by which they would ascertain the wants and feelings of the various communities for whose welfare they were responsible".[37]

Shortly after sending his recommendation on the above lines, Lord Dufferin left India. Lord Cross, the Secretary of State, took up the matter with Lord Lansdowne who succeeded Dufferin in December, 1888. "Lord Cross rejected the cardinal recommendation that for the popular element in councils recourse should be had as far as possible to the principle of election, and said that he thought 'it would be unwise to introduce a fundamental change of this description without much more positive evidence in its favour than was forthcoming'. The system was unfamiliar to Oriental ideas, and had only been tried on a small scale in local bodies. But Lord Lansdowne's Government stood to their guns. They urged that they would not be precluded from resort to some form of election where conditions justified belief in it; and they asked for power to make rules for the appointment of additional members by nomination or otherwise. They had their way".[38]

In the meantime the Congress took energetic measures to force the issue. The following Resolution was passed in the fifth session of the Congress at Poona, in 1889.

"That the following skeleton scheme for the reform and re-constitution of the Council of the Governor-General for making laws and regulations, and the Provincial Legislative Councils, is adopted, and that the President of the Congress do submit the same to Charles Bradlaugh, Esq., M.P. with the respectful request of this Congress that he may be pleased to cause a Bill to be drafted on the lines indicated in this skeleton scheme and introduce the same in the British House of Commons:-

(a) The Imperial and Provincial Legislative Councils to consist respectively of members, not less than one-half of whom are to be elected, not more than one-fourth to ex-officio, and the rest to be nominated by Government.

(b) Revenue districts to constitute ordinarily territorial units for electoral purposes.

(c) All male British subjects above 21 years of age possessing certain qualifications and not subject to certain disqualifications (both of which will be settled later) to be voters.

(d) Voters in each district to elect representatives to one or more electoral bodies, according to local circumstances, at the rate of 12 per million of the total population of the district, such representatives to possess qualifications and not to be subject to certain disqualifications, both of which will be settled later.

(e) All the representatives thus elected by all the districts, included in the jurisdiction of each electoral body, to elect members to the Imperial Legislature at the rate of 1 per every five million of the total population of the electoral jurisdiction, and to their own Provincial Legislature at the rate of 1 per million of the said total population, in such wise that whenever the Parsees, Christians, Muhammadans or Hindus are in a minority, the total number of Parsees, Christians, Muhammadans or Hindus, as the case may be, elected to the Provincial Legislature, shall not, so far as may be possible, bear a less proportion to the total number of members elected thereto, than the total number of Parsees, Christians, Hindus or Muhammadans, as the case may be, in such electoral jurisdiction, bear to its total population. Members of both Legislatures to possess certain qualifications and not to be subject to certain disqualifications, both of which will be settled later.

(f) All elections to be by ballot."

In accordance with this Resolution Mr. Bradlaugh introduced his Bill in the House of Commons in 1890. In order to forestall him the British Government introduced its own Bill in the House of Lords in 1890. After it was passed in that House, it came before the House of Commons in the same session, but did not get beyond the First Reading. It was introduced again in 1891 and postponed. In 1892 it was introduced in the House of Commons on 28 March by the Under-Secretary of State, George Nathaniel Curzon, who was destined ere long to play an important role in the history of British India.

In course of his speech, while introducing the Bill, Curzon defined the object of the Bill to be

"to widen the basis and to expand the functions of government in India; to give further opportunities than at present exist to the non-official and native elements in Indian Society to take part in the work of government, and in this way to lend official recognition to that remarkable development both of political interest and political capacity which has been visible among the higher classes of Indian society since the government of India was taken over by the Crown in 1858."

"The changes", continued Curzon, "which it is proposed to introduce by this Bill are, broadly speaking, three in number. The first is the concession of the privileges of financial criticism both in the Supreme and Provincial Councils; the second, the privilege of interpellation or the right of asking questions; and the third, an addition to the number of members in both classes of Councils."[39]

The most important question was the introduction of the method of election in appointing the members of the enlarged Councils. A section of the House, including Gladstone, attached special importance to it. That great liberal statesman remarked "that the great question we have before us—the question of real and profound interest—is the question of the introduction of the elective element into the government of India. That question overshadows and absorbs everything else; it is a question of vital importance, and also, at the same time, a question of great difficulty".[40] Mr. Schwann, (Member for Manchester) moved an amendment to the effect that "no reform on the Indian Councils which does not embody the elective principles will prove satisfactory".[41] Although this was not directly conceded in the Bill, Curzon's comments and explanations on clause 1 of the Bill, to which reference will be made later, satisfied Gladstone and the Opposition members. Next in point of importance was the number of members proposed to be added to the Councils. In justification of the smallness of this number Curzon observed: "The late Mr. Bradlaugh, who at different times introduced two Bills dealing with the reform of the India Councils into this House, proposed in those measures to swell the numbers on these Councils to quite impracticable and unmanageable proportions. Under his first Bill their totals would have amounted to more than two hundred and sixty, and under the second to more than two hundred and thirty. It is within the knowledge of every one who is acquainted with India that the number of persons who are competent and willing to take part in the functions of these Councils is nothing like adequate to supply the extravagant expectations of those Bills".[42] When it is remembered that the figure mentioned by Curzon refers to the total number of members of the Councils of the Governor-General and of the four Provinces,—five in all,—one feels amazed at the absurdity of the contention of Curzon that about 250 men, fit to be members of the Councils, could not be found in the whole of India in 1892. The

most remarkable part of Curzon's speech was that concerning the representative Government demanded by the Indian National Congress and the credentials of that body to make such a demand. As it enunciated a philosophy and formulated a doctrine which formed the key-note of the policy and utterances of many a British statesman in future, it deserves to be quoted in full:

"No system of representation that has ever been devised, no system of representation that the ingenuity of the hon. member can suggest, no system of representation that would stand the test of twenty-four hours' operation, would, in the most infinitesimal degree, represent the people of India. Who are the people of India? The people of India are the voiceless millions who can neither read nor write their own tongues, who have no knowledge whatever of English, who are not perhaps universally aware of the fact that the English are in their country as rulers. The people of India are the ryots and the peasants whose life is not one of political aspiration, but of mute penury and toil. The plans and policy of the Congress Party in India would leave this vast amorphous residuum absolutely untouched. I do not desire to speak in any other than terms of respect of the Congress Party of India. That party contains a number of intelligent, liberal-minded, and public-spirited men, who undoubtedly represent that portion of the Indian people which has profited by the educational advantages placed at their doors, and which is more or less imbued with European ideas; but as to their relationship to the people of India, the constituency which the Congress Party represent cannot be described as otherwise than a minute and almost microscopic minority of the total population of India. At the present time the population of British India is 221,000,000; and of that number it has been calculated that not more than from three to four per cent. can read or write any one of their native tongues; considerably less than one per cent.—about one-fourth or one-third—can read or write English. In the Province of Bengal alone, where the population exceeds 72,000,000, it has been calculated that the maximum constituency created by Mr. Bradlaugh's Bill would have only numbered a total of 870,000. It appears to me that you can as little judge of the feelings and aspirations of the people of India from the plans and proposals of the Congress Party as you can judge of the physical configuration of a country which is wrapped up in the mists of early morning, but a few of whose topmost peaks have been touched by the rising sun. To propose an elaborate system of representation for a people in this stage of development would appear to me to be, in the highest degree, premature and unwise. To describe such a system as representation of the people of India would be little better than a farce. The Government assume the responsibility of stating that, in their opinion, the time has not come when representative institutions, as we understand the term, can be extended to India. The idea of representation is alien to the Indian mind."[43]

Lord Curzon's speech provokes some comments. One might well ask why he was so anxious to procure "an early demise of the Congress"[44] if it was really of so little importance? Further, he himself lived to see the day when the Government, of which he was himself a prominent member, not only supported representative, but responsible, government in India, and set up Councils whose total non-official membership was more than 800. This was just twenty-five years after his speech, i.e. within the same genera-

tion. Is the difference a measure of the phenomenal progress of India in developing literacy and the qualities of true citizenship, or of change in British statesmanship brought about by the great war and revolutionary activities in India?

The Conservative Party as a whole, both inside and outside the Parliament, echoed Lord Curzon's views. The *Times* held in those days that India had been won by the sword and should be kept by the sword . . The *Quarterly Review* wrote that the Indians were not fit for self-government and called them a race of liars. Professor Goldwin Smith said that the concession of the smallest reform to India would lead to universal anarchy. Lord Salisbury (the Prime Minister) said. "I do not see what is the use of this political hypocrisy; it does not deceive the natives of India; they know perfectly well that they are governed by a superior race".[46]

It is only fair to add, however, that there were Britishers who took a radically different view of the Indian problem and protested against the reactionaries. During the course of the debate on the 1892 Bill, Mr. MacNeill, a member of the Opposition, observed: "The four principles now embodied in the Bill are mainly due to the Indian National Congress, and yet those who at that Congress suggested these very reforms were for years subject to wicked mis-representation." Another British member of Parliament, referring to the opposition to democratic institutions in India, said:

"Our Indian officials detest this motion, because it would secure a representation under which these horrors would be exposed and by which the Draconian Laws under which they exist would be repealed . Because the first thing that elected representatives would do would be to reveal such an appalling picture of poverty and heartrending sufferings of scores of millions of helpless human beings that the British nation would rise as one man and overturn their entire system. I repeat that it is only a selfish desire to retain lucrative posts which makes our European officials seek to persuade this House that the natives of India are unfit for representative institutions."[46]

The speeches of the members of Opposition, during the discussion on 1892 Bill, were full of facts and figures as well as authoritative quotations in support of the Indian case for the inclusion of elective principle in the Bill The activities and demands of the Indian National Congress were very ably placed before the House of Commons and a good case was made out for the introduction of franchise in India.[47]

The Indian Councils Act of 1892 provided that the number of additional members in the Governor-General's Council shall not be less than ten nor more than sixteen, and that of the Councils of the Governors of Bombay and Madras, not less than eight nor more than twenty. The Governor-General was authorized to fix the number of Council-

lors in Bengal and North-West Provinces and Oudh subject to a maximum of twenty for the former and fifteen for the latter. The new Councils were authorized to discuss the annual financial statement and ask questions about the same, subject to the rules made by the Governor-General or Governors and Lieutenant-Governors for their respective Councils. "But no member at any such meeting of any Council shall have power to submit or propose any resolution or to divide the Council in respect of any such financial discussion, or the answer to any question asked under the authority of this Act, or the rules made under this Act".

The method of nominating the additional members of the Councils was laid down in subsection (4) of Clause I, which runs as follows: "(4). The Governor-General in Council may from time to time, with the approval of the Secretary of State in Council, make regulations as to the conditions under which such nominations, or any of them, shall be made by the Governor-General, Governors, and Lieutenant-Governors respectively, and prescribe the manner in which such regulations shall be carried into effect".

Lord Curzon pointed out, while introducing the Bill, that this clause authorized the election of members, without any express stipulation to that effect. He said that this clause was introduced as an amendment by Lord Northbrook in the House of Lords deliberately for this purpose. Lord Curzon then proceeded further, and by way of explaining the full implications of this clause, observed: "Let me call the attention of the hon. member to the fact that Lord Kimberley has thus expressed himself elsewhere on this clause:

'I am bound to say that I can express my own satisfaction because I regard this as to a certain extent an admission of the elective principle'. On another occasion he said: 'I myself believe that under this clause it will be possible for the Governor-General to make arrangements by which certain persons may be presented to him, having been chosen by election if the Governor-General should find that such a system can properly be established'.

Mr. Maclean (Oldham): Does the Government accept this view of Lord Kimberley?

Mr. Curzon: Undoubtedly the opinions expressed by Lord Kimberley are those which are also shared by the Secretary of State. Under this Act it would be in the power of the Viceroy to invite representative bodies in India to elect or select or delegate representatives of themselves and of their opinions to be nominated to those Houses, and thus by slow degrees, by tentative measures, and in a matter like this measures cannot be otherwise than tentative, we may perhaps approximate in some way to the ideal which the hon. Member for North Manchester (Mr. Schwann) has in view."

This was regarded as satisfactory even by Gladstone, who suggested the withdrawal of the amendment by Mr. Schwann as the declaration of the Government substantially agreed with it.[49]

The Government at Home acted in the spirit of Curzon's explanation. "Her Majesty's Government in transmitting the Act of 1892 explained that the intentions of Parliament were that—

'Where corporations have been established with definite powers upon a recognized administrative basis, or where associations have been formed upon a substantial community of legitimate interests, professional, commercial, or territorial, the Governor-General and the local Governors might find convenience and advantage in consulting from time to time such bodies, and in entertaining at their discretion an expression of their views and recommendations with regard to the selection of members in whose qualifications they might be disposed to confide.'

"Technically, the function of the nominating bodies was to be that of recommendation only, but the political sense of the Government of India told them that it was impracticable either to insist on selection from a panel of names proferred, or to reject individual nominations at discretion. They also declined, otherwise than by laying down certain general qualifications, to fetter the discretion of the recommending bodies. In consultation with local Governments they drew up regulations which Lord Kimberley accepted. These provided for an official majority, but restricted it so far as was thought possible; and they also left the majority of the non-official seats to be filled by recommendation. The term "election" was sedulously eschewed; but inasmuch as the nominations by recommending bodies came to be accepted as a matter of course the fact of election to an appreciable proportion of the non-official seats was firmly established."[50]

As a result of the Act of 1892, not more than ten out of sixteen additional members in the Governor-General's Council were nominated from among non-officials. in order to keep the official majority Four, out of these ten, were selected on the recommendation of the non-official members of the four Provincial Councils, and one on that of the Calcutta Chamber of Commerce. The five remaining non-official seats were directly nominated by the Governor-General. This was hardly in keeping with the elective principle so generously announced by Curzon. The elective element in the Provincial Councils consisted, at the utmost, of eight members recommended by a few large cities, by groups of municipalities and district boards, by large zamindars, by chambers of Commerce, and by Universities.

It is hardly necessary to point out that the changes effected by the Act of 1892 and the rules made thereunder fell far short of the demands formulated by the Indian National Congress on behalf of the moderate section of the politically conscious Indians. The Congress asked for representative institutions, not consultative councils. What was worse is that the Rules made under the Act made the Council still more ineffective. In 1894 the Congress passed a Resolution expressing regret that neither the Rules of the Government of India nor the practice of most of the Local Governments gave

effect to the spirit of the Act. It will be seen later, that in future amendments of the constitution also the Congress had to complain that the real spirit and intention of the Act were ignored by the Rules made thereunder by the Government of India, and that what was given by the right hand was taken away by the left.

It is to be noted that no Legislative Council was granted to the Panjāb till 1897, and even then the right of interpellation was not given to the members, and these were nominated without any recommendation from popular and public bodies as was done in other provinces.

But although there was no real satisfaction on the part of the people, they were enthusiastic in taking advantage of the Act of 1892. Eminent Indians like G. K. Gokhale, Surendra Nath Banerji, Rash Behari Ghosh, Ashutosh Mukherji, Pheroze Shah Mehta, P. Ananda Charlu, Madhu Sudan Das, R. M. Sayani, G. R. M. Chitnavis, B K. Bose, S. H. Bilgrami and Bishambar Nath took their share in the legislation of the country, and left a deep impress of their knowledge, eloquence, wisdom, and sound statesmanship. In view of the solid block of official majority they could not effect any improvement in the administration, or change in the policy of the British rulers. But those who had eyes to see and ears to hear could not but envisage a new India slowly emerging from the obscurity of the past. It cannot but be regarded as unfortunate, from the points of view of both England and India, that a more substantial measure of reforms was not introduced in 1892 which would have made a better use of Indian talents and rallied the loyal moderate sections among the Indians to the side of the Government, instead of making the Indian intelligentsia a set of discontented and hostile critics of the Government.

Even Sir Valentine Chirol, by no means a friend of India, was constrained to make the following remarks:

"It must be conceded that, had Government at that time taken the Congress by the hand instead of treating it with disdain and suspicion, it might have played loyally and usefully a part analogous to that of Her Majesty's Opposition at home —a part which Lord Dufferin had been shrewd enough in the beginning not to dismiss as altogether impossible or undesirable. Its claim to represent Indian opinion, as within certain limits it unquestionably did, was ignored, and it was left to drift without any attempt at official guidance into waters none the less dangerous because they seemed shallow."[51]

5. *Finance*

Reference has been made above[52] to the centralised financial administration of the Government of India. Its nature is thus described by Sir John Strachey: "The Supreme Government controlled

the smallest details of every branch of the expenditure; its authority was required for the employment of every person paid with public money, however small his salary, and its sanction was necessary for the grant of funds even for purely local works of improvement, for every local road, for every building, however insignificant".[53]

The effect of such a system upon the Provincial Governments may be easily imagined. They had no motive to economize their expenditure, and were tempted to raise their demands as high as possible on the well-known principle that he who aims at the sky shoots much higher than he who aims at the tree. Experience also proved its wisdom, for they found that the Government of India not unoften judged of the urgencies of requirements by the importunity with which they were urged.

There were other evils, too, of a more serious nature.

"Constant differences of opinion about petty details of expenditure, and constant interference of the Government of India in matters of trivial importance, brought with them, as a necessary consequence, frequent conflicts with the Local Governments regarding questions of provincial administration of which they were the best judges, and of which the Government of India could know little. The relations between the Supreme Government and the Local Governments were altogether inharmonious, and every attempt to make financial control more stringent increased an antagonism the mischief of which was felt throughout the public service."[54]

Attempts were made from time to time to remove the evils. "So far back as 1860 a reform of the system in the direction of provincialising finance was suggested by General Dickens, then Secretary to the Government of India in the Department of Public Works. Mr. Laing, the Finance Minister, drew attention to the subject in his Budget statement for 1861-62, and again in 1862-63. In 1867, a definite scheme of Provincial Finance was drawn up by General Richard Strachey for Mr. Massey, then Finance Minister; but nothing was actually accomplished at that time".[55]

It was not till 1870 that a definite scheme was adopted for the separation of central and provincial finances. This was elaborated by Lord Mayo in a Resolution dated 14 December, 1870.[56] According to this scheme the Government of India would make over to the Provincial Governments certain departments of administration in which they were specially interested, and granted permanently from the Imperial revenue, for these services, a fixed amount, calculated on the basis of the assignments made for these services in 1870. These departments were Jails, Registration, Police, Education, Medical Services, Printing, Roads, Miscellaneous Public Improvements, and Civil Buildings. The Provincial Governments

would be at liberty to allot funds to the different departments as they liked. Henceforth the Provincial Service Estimates should be prepared upon the basis of these assignments and each Provincial Government will publish its annual budget in the Local Gazette, together with a financial statement, to be placed, if possible, before the Local Legislative Council. Any portion of the Assignments made to any province that may be unspent at the end of the year will not lapse to the Imperial revenue, but will remain at the disposal of the Provincial Government. The financial control of the Provincial Governments was however to be subjected to certain important restrictions, the most important of which was that they could not, without the previous sanction of the Government of India, (1) create any appointment with a salary of more than Rs. 250 a month, (2) create or abolish any class or grade of officers, and (3) raise the pay of any class or grade of officers. This was evidently intended to maintain uniformity in respect of official establishments all over India

The three following paras of the Resolution of 1870 enunciated the underlying object of the new financial scheme:

"22. The Governor-General in Council is fully aware that this Resolution will effect a wide change in Indian Administration. It has been adopted, after long and careful consideration, in the hope that it will be received by the Governments in the spirit in which it is promulgated. The Governor-General in Council believes that it will import an element of certainty into the fiscal system which has, hitherto, been absent; and that it will lead to more harmony in action and feeling between the Supreme and Provincial Governments than has, heretofore, prevailed.

23. But beyond all this, there is a greater and wider object in view. Local interest, supervision and care are necessary to success in the management of funds devoted to Education, Sanitation, Medical Charity, and Local Public Works. The operation of this Resolution, in its full meaning and integrity, will afford opportunities for the development of Self-Government, for strengthening Municipal Institutions, and for the association of Natives and Europeans, to a greater extent than heretofore, in the administration of affairs."

The impact of the scheme over general administration is described as follows:

"25. The additional powers of financial control which will now be assumed by the Governments, must be accompanied by a corresponding increase of administrative responsibility. It is the desire of the Governor-General in Council to confine the interference of the Supreme Government in India in the administration of the "Provincial Services" to what is necessary for the discharge of that responsibility which the Viceroy in Council owes to the Queen and her responsible advisers, and for the purpose of securing adherence to the financial conditions now prescribed, and to the general policy of the Government of India."

Lord Mayo made it quite clear in his speech before the Legislative Council on 18 March, 1871, that the assignments made to the Provincial Governments could not be increased in future at least for a number of years. Any further sum that may be needed must be provided by local taxation.

The new scheme came into operation from the official year 1871-72. It was soon apparent that although the scheme effected considerable improvement, it had also some drawbacks. Assignments were made from the Centre to the Provinces on the basis of their expenditure in 1870-71, without any consideration for the real needs of the different provinces. Further, as Sir John Strachey pointed out, the measures of Lord Mayo,

"while they transferred to the Local Governments the responsibility for meeting charges which had an undoubted tendency to increase, the income of which the Local Governments had to dispose, although not quite a fixed amount, had little room for development. The difficulty has perhaps not, hitherto, been generally felt to a serious extent, because it has been met by economy and good management; it must, however, be felt hereafter; and, for this and for still more important reasons, I have always maintained that the system of Provincial Assignments established in 1871 ought to be applied not only to expenditure but also to income. What we have to do is, not to give the Local Governments fresh powers of taxation, but, on the contrary to do all that we can to render fresh taxation unnecessary and to give to those governments direct inducements to improve those sources of existing revenue which depend for their productiveness on good administration."[57]

With a view to removing these defects, Sir John Strachey, Finance Member in the Government of Lord Lytton, introduced a new scheme which transferred to Local Governments the financial responsibility for other services, such as Land Revenue, Excise, Stamps, General Administration, Stationery, Law and Justice, the cost of which had hitherto been met from the general revenues. The Government of India assigned to the Local Governments, "for the discharge of the services newly imposed on them, not an increase in their permanent grants, but a share in the revenue realised under certain heads in their respective provinces".[58]

This may be illustrated by a concrete example; namely that of the North-Western Provinces. The Central Government assigned to it "the revenues derived from excise, stamps, law and justice, collections from certain estates, and some miscellaneous items, on condition that the Supreme Government should take half of any surplus that might be realised over the specified amount that these sources were estimated to yield, and should bear half of any deficit". This devolution of function was, however, hedged in by some important restrictions. "The Local Governments were not invested with any power of imposing fresh taxation, of undertaking any new general service, of abolishing or reducing the pay and allowances of any appointment with a salary of more than Rs. 250 a month, or of making any change in the system of revenue management, or in the form of procedure of the public accounts, without the sanction of the Government of India. The principle of it all was that

the Local Government should not enforce economy at the expense of the efficiency of the administration or increase expenditure which would affect the uniformity of the system in other parts of India".[59]

There were further modifications in the scheme of Financial Devolution to the Provinces for a period of five years by the Act of 1882, during the administration of Lord Ripon, when Major Baring (afterwards Lord Cromer) was Finance Member. The system of giving permanent grants to the Provincial Governments was discontinued, "but, instead, they were granted the whole product of some sources of revenue, and a share in the product of others, including land revenue. The result was that a few, including Opium, Salt, Customs, Tributes, Post Office and Military Receipts, were reserved almost wholly as Imperial; a few others, such as receipts by Civil Departments and receipts from Provincial Public Works, were handed over almost entirely to the Provincial Governments; the majority, being those before transferred, with the addition of Forests and Registration, were divided, for the most part in equal proportions, between the Imperial and Provincial exchequers; and as the balance was against the Provinces, this was rectified not by the allotment of a lump sum as formerly, but by a fixed percentage on the Land Revenue, which was thus also in a measure made Provincial".[60] There were henceforth three sources of revenue,—Imperial, Provincial and Divided.

The Resolution of 1882 also provided for quinquennial settlements. Further, the relations between the Imperial and Provincial Governments were defined with regard to the two extraordinary charges of war and famine. For war, no charge was to be made on the Provinces except under abnormal circumstances threatening disasters, and for famine financial assistance would be given by the Imperial Government to the Provincial Governments at an earlier stage than before. These arrangements gave comparative security to the Provincial Governments regarding finance. In the words of Major Baring, "one result of the provincial arrangements concluded in 1882 was that of the four peculiar dangers to which the finances of India were exposed, *viz.*, war, a diminution of the opium revenue, fall of exchange, and famine, the first three had to be met by the Government of India and only the fourth was felt by the Local Governments".[61] Further revisions were made at the end of each quinquennium, in 1887, 1892 and 1897, but these involved no change of principles.

Towards the close of 1897 "the provincial finances were reviewed, an estimate was made of the expenditure thought necessary for each Province on all the services with which it was charged, and a

suitable proportion of the revenue collected in the Province was set apart to meet it. Under the contracts of 1897, the Provincial Governments, speaking generally, retained the whole of the provincial rates, and of the receipts of certain departments, such as law courts, jails, police, education, medical services, local marine services, scientific departments, pension contribution, most of the minor irrigation works, buildings and roads, stationery and some miscellaneous heads; three-fourths of the stamp revenue; half of the revenue from assessed taxes, forests, and registration; a varying proportion (generally one-fourth) of the land revenue, and one-fourth of the excise revenue (one-half in Burma and Bengal). With some exceptions, they had to meet out of these revenues expenditure under most of the heads just enumerated, and a share of the cost of collection under the revenue heads corresponding to the proportion of the receipts which they received, though in the case of land revenue, they bore, except in Bengal, the whole cost of collection. They were also responsible for famine-relief expenditure up to their financial capacity, for certain political charges, and miscellaneous items. The total revenues thus assigned to them amounted in 1901-2 to £16,746,000, while the aggregate of the revenue heads in the collection of which they had a direct and substantial interest was £36,811,000 or nearly 49 p.c. of the gross revenues of India.

"Any balance which they could accumulate by careful administration was placed to their credit in the accounts; but on occasions of extraordinary stress, the Central Government had sometimes called upon them to surrender a portion of their balances. This was done during the Afghan War, after which the sums so taken were refunded; and again in 1886-87, in 1890-91 and in 1894-95, the amounts being refunded in the last two instances".[62]

An important departure was made in 1904 with the introduction of what came to be known as quasi-permanent settlements. According to it revenues assigned to the Provincial Governments were definitely fixed and were not subject to revision except in cases of extreme necessity on the part of the Government of India or when the assignment made was materially disproportionate to normal provincial requirements.

The general position in regard to the financial adjustment between the Central and Local Governments by the end of the period under review was stated as follows by the Financial Secretary to the Government of India to the Royal Commission on Decentralisation:

"The general principles which underlie the financial settlements made by the Government of India with a Local Government are as follows:

(a) That the Government of India shall retain certain administrative services which it is inexpedient to hand over to Provincial Governments, and that they

shall reserve the revenue from these services, and such a share of the other public revenues as shall be adequate to the expenditure falling upon them.

(b) That the remaining administrative services of the country being entrusted to Provincial Governments, each Local Government shall receive an assured income which will be independent of the needs of the Government of India and sufficient for its normal expenditure.

(c) That the income shall be given in the form of a defined share of the revenue which the Local Government collects, in order that the Local Government's resources may expand along with the needs of its administration.

((d) That, so far as possible, the same share of the chief sources of revenue shall be given to each Province, to ensure a reasonable equality of treatment.

* * * * *

The object of making Provincial settlements quasi-permanent was to give the Local Governments a more independent position, and a more substantial and enduring interest in the management of their resources than had previously been possible. Under the previous system, when settlements were revised every five years, it was the practice for the Imperial Government to resume the surplus of the Local Government's revenue over its expenditure. This unfortunate necessity (which it is only just to say was largely the result of severe financial pressure on the Government of India during the years of low exchange) went far to destroy any incentive in a Local Government to economise, as it knew that its reduced standard of expenditure would be the basis for a correspondingly unfavourable settlement at the next revision. All this disappears under the existing system. A Local Government need not fear, in any except very abnormal circumstances, the resumption of its surplus revenue by the Imperial Government; it can count upon a reasonable continuity of financial policy; it will be able to enjoy fully the fruits of its economies, and it will not be hurried into ill-considered proposals in order to raise its apparent standard of expenditure. On the other hand, the Imperial Government improves its relations with Local Governments by avoiding five-yearly controversies over the settlement; it can calculate its own resources with more confidence, and can undertake reductions of taxation or fresh schemes of expenditure with a clearer knowledge of the consequences than was formerly possible."*

"Generally speaking, the effect of these settlements was as follows: the Government of India received the whole of the revenue accruing from opium, salt, customs, mint, railways, post and telegraphs, and tributes from Native States, while the Provincial Governments got all receipts from registration and from the spending departments which they managed, such as police, education, law and justice, and medical. The receipts from land revenue, excise, stamps, income tax, and forests were divided between the Imperial and Provincial Governments, generally in equal proportions. The receipts from the larger irrigation works were also generally shared: those from minor irrigation works were (except in one Province) wholly Provincial, as were also civil works receipts other than those appertaining to Imperial buildings. The bulk of the Provincial revenues was derived from the divided heads.

"Expenditure in connection with sources of revenue which were wholly Imperial was Imperial also, while, subject to minor excep-

tions, Provincial revenues were responsible for the whole of the expenditure incurred within the Province in connexion with land-revenue (which included district administration), registration, law and justice, police, jails, education, medical, stationery and printing, and Provincial civil works. Charges relating to stamps, excise, income tax, and forests were equally divided, while the incidence of Irrigation expenditure followed that of the receipts. The Provincial Governments were also responsible for the charges of such scientific and minor departments as they administered, and for political charges in connexion with Native States under their control; but the bulk of the expenditure in connexion with the Political Departments fell on the Government of India, as did all ecclesiastical charges".[64]

III. PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION

1. *Reorganization of Provinces*

The boundaries of the Presidency of Bengal were twice changed. In 1874 Assam was constituted a separate Province under a Chief Commissioner. In 1905 territories in Bengal and Assam were divided between two Provinces known as 'Bengal' and 'Eastern Bengal and Assam'. This administrative measure was big with future consequences and will be treated later in details.

Oudh (Awadh) was constituted a Province under a Chief Commissioner immediately after its annexation in 1856 In 1877 the same person was appointed to this office as well as to that of the Lieutenant-Governor of North-Western Provinces which now included Jhansi. In 1902 these two were united and named the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh.

The districts, west of the Jamuna, ceded in 1803 and known as the Delhi tract, were transferred from the North-Western Provinces to the Panjab in 1858, and next year the Chief Commissioner of the Panjab became a Lieutenant-Governor In 1901 the frontier districts of the Panjab were constituted a new province called the North-West Frontier Province.

In 1861 a new province, known as the Central Provinces, was created by uniting the Sagar and Narbada District (excluding Jhansi) with Nagpur and was placed under a Chief Commissioner. Sambalpur was included in the Province in 1862, and Berar was added to it in 1902 when it was permanently leased to the British by the Nizam of Hyderabad. Lower Burma was placed under a Chief-Commissioner in 1860 Upper Burma was added to it after its conquest in 1886. In 1897 the Province was placed in charge of a Lieutenant-Governor.

2. *Provincial Administration*

The Provinces were now ruled by a Governor, Lieutenant-Governor, or a Chief Commissioner. Some of the Provinces had a Legislative Council whose nature and origin have been described above.[66] Bombay and Madras had, in addition, an Executive Council of three members, as before.

The pivot of administration was, as before, the District, divided into a number of Sub-divisions, Taluks, Tahsils etc. The general pattern of the District administration was fixed in 1859, when the offices of the Magistrate and Collector were once more united in the same person who henceforth became the sole head of the District.

The District Magistrate-Collector remained in fact as the chief executive head and administrator of his jurisdiction. Advocating concentration of powers in the hands of the District Magistrates, Sir George Campbell, Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal from 1871 to 1874, observed: 'Departments are excellent servants, but, as he considers, very bad masters. He has therefore striven to make the Magistrate-Collector of a Bengal district, generally comprising of 1½ to 2½ millions of inhabitants, the real executive chief and administrator of the tract of country committed to him, and supreme over everyone and everything, except the proceedings of the courts of justice. As District Magistrate he is also head of the department of criminal justice which is charged with the summary trial of small cases and the inquiry into greater cases previous to trial at sessions, although he generally rather distributes and superintends this work than does a large share of it himself.' The Lieutenant-Governor aimed at making quite clear the thorough subordination of the police to the magistrate for all and every purpose.[66] But this view was repugnant to some liberal-minded Englishmen. In a memorial sent in 1899 to Lord George Hamilton and signed by Lord Hobhouse and several other judges of Indian experience, the Collector's powers are described as "the strange union of constable and magistrate, public prosecutor and criminal judge, revenue collector and appeal court in revenue cases".[67]

Towards the end of the nineteenth century there was a demand in certain quarters for separation of executive and judicial functions. The Indian National Congress strongly and persistently advocated it. Mr. R. C. Dutt submitted in 1893 a scheme in which he made the following suggestion: "The District Magistrate, whom I will henceforth call the District Officer, should be employed purely on executive and revenue work, which is sufficiently varied, onerous and engrossing, and should be relieved of his judicial duties which should be transferred to the District Judge. The subordinates of

the District Officer, who will continue to perform revenue and executive work only, will remain under him; while those of his present subordinates who will be employed on purely judicial work should be subordinate to the Judge and not to the District Officer".[68] A Memorial on behalf of some members of British Parliament urging the "separation of judicial from executive functions in the Indian Administration" was submitted to the Secretary of State in July, 1899, as mentioned above. The official view-point was always strongly against it and was thus expressed by Sir John Strachey in 1894: "We often hear demands for the more complete separation of the executive and judicial functions of the District Officer, but they are demands based on the assumption that a principle necessary for England must be good for India also. There could be no greater error. The first necessity of good administration in such a country as India is that it should be strong, and it cannot be strong without the concentration of authority. In the everyday internal administration there is no office so important as that of the district officer. He is one of the mainstays of our dominion, and few steps could be taken in India which would be more mischievous and dangerous than to weaken those powers which enable him to maintain his position as the local representative of the Government".[69]

The Magistrate's duty embraced almost the whole of administration. The ordinary district jails, while placed in immediate charge of an officer selected for the duty, were also under the general control of the Magistrate, instead of being, as heretofore, purely departmental establishments. In a large number of districts a similar arrangement was also effected in regard to the Department of Public Works. The medical duties and also the collection and observation of vital statistics and the local meteorological observations were carried on by the Civil Surgeon under the control and supervision of the Magistrate. In Non-Regulation areas the District Officers came to be called Deputy-Commissioners. A District Officer was assisted in his work by a Subordinate Magistrate, who exercised both revenue and magisterial powers, and who was usually Joint, Assistant or Deputy-Magistrate. The service of Sub-Deputy-Collectors was created in 1873.

The District Officer continued to discharge the multifarious functions noted above, and the efficiency of administration depended much on his personality. Hunter wrote in 1892: "The District Officer, whether known as Collector-Magistrate or as Deputy-Commissioner, is the responsible head of his jurisdiction. Upon his energy and personal character depends ultimately the efficiency of our Indian Government. His own special duties are so numerous

and so various as to bewilder the outsider; and the work of his subordinates, European and Native, largely depends upon the stimulus of his personal example. His position has been compared to that of the French Prefect; but such a comparison is unjust in many ways to the Indian District Officer. He is not a mere subordinate of a central bureau, who takes his colour from his chief and represents the political parties or the permanent officialism of the capital. The Indian Collector is a strongly individualised worker in every department of rural well-being with a large measure of local independence and of personal initiative. As the name of Collector-Magistrate implies, his main functions are twofold. He is a fiscal officer, charged with the collection of the revenue from the land and other sources; he is also a revenue and criminal judge, both of first instance and in appeal. But his title by no means exhausts his multifarious duties. He does in his smaller local sphere all that the Home Secretary superintends in England, and a great deal more, for he is the representative of paternal and not of a constitutional Government. Police, jails, education, municipalities, roads, sanitation, dispensaries, the local taxation, and the Imperial revenues of his Distrct are to him matters of daily concern. He is expected to make himself acquainted with every phase of the social life of the natives, and with each natural aspect of the country. He should be a lawyer, an accountant, a surveyor, and a ready writer of state papers. He ought also to possess no mean knowledge of agriculture, political economy and engineering".[70]

To enlist the support of the influential landlords and non-official Europeans for local administration, the Bengal Government introduced the practice of appointing Honorary Magistrates in some of the Districts of the Lower Provinces in 1857. In 1859 these offices were abolished by Sir F. Halliday. But on the suggestion of the Government of India, his successor, Sir John Peter Grant, appointed forty-five Honorary Magistrates in Calcutta and forty-five more in the *Mofussil* or outlying districts. They were vested with the judicial, and not with the police, powers of the Magistracy and were usually given the power to try minor cases only; nowhere did they have any control over the police. The system was extended by Sir Stuart Bayley in 1889. In Awadh and the Panjab also magisterial functions were entrusted to carefully selected landholders and others.[71]

Calcutta, though a part of the charge of the Commissioner of the Presidency Division, was not included in a District. The Board of Revenue had superintendence over its stamps and customs. A special Police Commissioner was given control over its police estab-

lishment. Five stipendiary Magistrates administered criminal justice, and offences under the Municipal Acts were tried by a Municipal Magistrate.

Two important officers of a District were the Superintendent of Police and the Civil Surgeon. The former was responsible for police administration in the District. For maintenance of law and order he was under the control of the District Magistrate, but as regards the internal management of the police force he was under direct subordination to his departmental head. The Civil Surgeon, except in Bombay, became the head of the medical and sanitary administration of a District and of the headquarters town. He was also in charge of the District Jail. In Madras and Bengal, the District Engineer or the Local Fund Engineer, who was an employee of the District Board, looked after roads and engineering works of different kinds.

The 'local organization' of Education, Public Work, Forests and other specialized administrative departments, which evolved during the second half of the nineteenth century, varied in different parts of the country. The Collector had control over all these. The Royal Commission upon Decentralisation observed in its Report of 1909 that "the position of Collector as administrative Head of the District should be recognized by officers of all special departments".

The Panjab remained under a Non-Regulation type of administration. The Province was divided at first into seven, and later, in 1850, into eight Divisions, and into twenty-four Districts, each under a Deputy-Commissioner. In 1907-08 the Province consisted of twenty-nine Districts, grouped into five Divisions and forty-three Native States. A District was divided into sub-Collectorates called *Tahsils*, varying in number from three to seven. Each *Tahsil* was under a *Tahsildar* with a Deputy or *Naib-Tahsildar*. The *Tahsildar* had under him from two to five *Qanungos*, each one of whom exercised supervision over twenty to thirty *Patwaris* or Revenue accountants, who were in charge of revenue accounts of a group of villages.

The office of the Judicial Commissioner was abolished in 1866, and a Chief Court consisting at least of two judges (number raised subsequently to five) was established with final appellate authority in civil and criminal cases. Shortly afterwards a Settlement Commissioner was appointed to supervise land revenue settlements. He was replaced by a second Financial Commissioner in 1884, but in 1897 the old arrangement was restored, a Settlement Officer replacing a second Financial Commissioner.

The Central Provinces was created in 1861. Its administration was placed under a Chief Commissioner with a Judicial Commissioner as principal judicial authority. The Province was divided into eighteen Districts, each being in charge of a Deputy-Commissioner, who was the chief revenue authority and the District Magistrate, and exercised all the functions of a District officer. In his revenue and criminal work the Deputy-Commissioner was assisted by (1) one or more Assistant Commissioners (members of the Indian Civil Service); (2) one or more Extra-Assistant Commissioners (members of the Provincial Civil Service, usually Indians); and (3) *Tahsildars* and *Naib-Tahsildars* (all Indians). Subsequently the Sub-divisional system, like that of the other Provinces, was introduced into the Central Provinces. Thus an Assistant or Extra-Assistant Commissioner was placed in charge of one or two *Tahsils* with the powers of a Sub-divisional Magistrate. For administrative purposes a District was divided into two or more *Tahsils*, each being under a *Tahsildar* and a *Naib-Tahsildar*. The *Tahsildar* was the Deputy-Commissioner's "right hand in his revenue and executive work". Each District had a land record staff, controlled by an Indian Superintendent under the Deputy-Commissioner and consisting of several grades of officers, Revenue Inspectors and *Patwaris*.

IV. RECRUITMENT TO PUBLIC SERVICE

Section 32 of the Government of India Act of 1858 imposed upon the Secretary of State, acting with the advice and assistance of Her Majesty's Civil Service Commissioners in England, the duty of making Regulations regarding appointments to the Indian Civil Service. The Statute of 1858 reaffirmed the competitive system. In the Regulations for the year 1860 the maximum age for admission to the open competition was lowered from twenty-three to twenty-two, and selected candidates were to be on probation for a year in England. From 1866 this age was lowered to twenty-one, and the successful candidates were required to pass through a period of two years' probation at an approved University in England. By the Indian Civil Service Act of 1861, due largely to the initiative of Wood, then Secretary of State for India, certain offices were exclusively reserved for covenanted civil servants.

The number of British competitors for the Indian Civil Service increased in a few years after 1860. Thus the "total number of competitors rose from 184 for eighty vacancies in 1860 to 284 for fifty-two vacancies in 1865, and 325 for forty vacancies in 1870".[72] The Indian candidates were handicapped by various adverse circumstances. To compete with English students in an examination conducted

in English language and in accordance with the ideals of a British University, was not an easy task. Further, the journey to England was expensive, and, among the Hindus, meant a brave challenge to social rules. "A visit to England", writes Sir Surendranath Banerji, "in those days was a more serious affair than it is now. It not only meant absence from home and those near and dear to one for a number of years, but there was the grim prospect of social ostracism, which for all practical purposes has now happily passed away".[73] For these reasons, very few Indian candidates then competed. Three Indians, Surendranath Banerji, Biharilal Gupta and Romesh Chunder Dutt were successful in 1869. But in 1870 only one out of seven Indian candidates successfully competed for the service.

In spite of Section 87 of the Charter Act of 1833 and the Queen's Proclamation of 1858, to the effect that there will be no discrimination in appointments to public services between Englishmen and Indians (which was reiterated in the Act of 1861), Indian element in the superior services continued to be inadequate. This was felt even by some British statesmen. Lord Houghton, for example, observed "that the declaration, which stated that the Government of India would be conducted without reference to differences of race, was magnificent but had hitherto been futile".[74]

That it was a deliberate policy of the British Government to ignore the provisions of the Charter Act of 1833 and the Queen's Proclamation in this respect was clearly admitted by Lord Lytton, the Viceroy, as will be evident from the following extract from his confidential minute of 1878 to the Secretary of State: "No sooner was the Act (of 1833) passed than the Government began to devise means for practically evading the fulfilment of it under the terms of the Act, which are studied and laid to heart by that increasing class of educated Indians whose development the Government encourages without being able to satisfy the aspirations of its existing members. Every such Indian, once admitted to Government employment in posts previously reserved to the Covenanted Service, is entitled to expect and claim appointment in the fair course of promotion to the highest posts in that service. We all know that these claims and expectations never can or will be fulfilled We have had to choose between prohibiting them and cheating them, and we have chosen the least straightforward course. The application to Indians of the competitive examination system as conducted in England, and the recent reduction in the age at which candidates can compete, are all so many deliberate and transparent subterfuges for stultifying the Act, and reducing it to a dead letter. Since I am writing confidentially, I don't hesitate to say that both the Government of England and of India

appear to me, up to the moment, unable to answer satisfactorily the charges of having taken every means in their power of breaking to the heart the words of promise they have utttered to the ear."[75]

The only way by which the legitimate aspirations of the Indians could be satisfied without impairing the standard and efficiency of the services was to hold simultaneous examinations both in India and England. This was realized by the liberal-minded Englishmen when the competitive examination for the recruitment of higher services was instituted in 1853. A proposal for simultaneous examination was then made, but it was not carried. Shortly after 1858 the Secretary of State appointed a Committee to inquire into the subject of the employment of the Indians. This Committee "had no hesitation in recommending simultaneous examinations. The Civil Service Commissioners concurred and "did not anticipate much difficulty in arranging for this". But nothing was done, and this report of 1860 seems to have dropped out of the Records of the Government of India and has not been reproduced amongst the papers that have been published officially on the subject".[76]

The Indians made insistent demands for simultaneous examinations. In order to meet the demand half-way an Act was passed in 1870 providing for the appointment of a native of India to "offices, places and employment in the covenanted Civil Service.........although such a native should not have been admitted to the Civil Service in the manner already prescribed by law". The Act required the Governor-General to frame regulations by which Indians who had not passed an examination might be put into the covenanted service. But the Government of India would not move. Reminded again and again by the Secretary of State of the provision of the Act, it took four years to respond, and when the regulations were sent to London for approval they were found "to place too narrow a construction upon the Statute".

It is, however, only fair to mention that some senior members of the Indian Civil Service took a far more liberal and enlightened view of the subject. Indeed the case for the appointment of Indians to the offices reserved for the Civil Service could hardly be better put, even by an Indian, than is done by Sir Richard Temple, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, in a minute dated 5th June, 1876.[76a] He begins by saying that while there is a general agreement of views on the "suitableness and propriety of appointing natives to the higher offices in the judicial branch", it is generally thought preferable to refrain from placing natives in the higher class of executive posts which demand "qualities other than intellectual, such as energy, decision, self-reliance, power of combination and organisation, of

managing men, and so on",—qualities which are deemed to be as yet imperfectly developed in natives. He then observes: "But, if this be the case, it is a cogent reason for beginning to appoint natives to the higher offices in the executive branch, for certainly these qualities, other than intellectual, are of the utmost consequence to the well-being and progress of a nation. If our rule, having been firmly consolidated, is to be made to guide the natives on and on towards their highest good, these are the very qualities that should be specially cultivated. And one notable way of cultivating them is to employ meritorious natives in those higher executive capacities which will stimulate energy, enforce activity, strengthen the will, brace the sense of responsibility, and educe those moral forces which are summed up in the expression 'manhood'. Referring to the doubts expressed whether the natives will succeed, if appointed to higher posts, Sir Richard comments, that if no such trial is made then certainly the natives never will or can become fit, that it is but just to the natives to give them a chance; that their unfitness ought not to be assumed until they have been tried and found wanting.

In the meantime the situation was rendered worse by the lowering of the maximum age for admission to competition from twenty-one to nineteen. This made it wellnigh impossible for an Indian candidate to successfully compete, and there can be hardly any doubt that this was the real object of the new rules Henceforth the agitation for the admission of Indians to the Civil Service by lowering the maximum age-limit and holding simultaneous examinations in England and India grew so strong that the hands of the Government were forced, under circumstances to be related later, and the necessary rules were framed in 1879.

In a Resolution, dated 24 December, 1879, the Government of India declared that appointments under the rules would generally be limited to "young men of good family and social position possessed of fair abilities and education, to whom the offices which were open to them in the uncovenanted service had not proved sufficient inducement to come forward for employment". It was also provided "that a proportion not exceeding one-sixth of the total number of covenanted Civil Servants appointed in any year by the Secretary of State should be natives selected in India by the local Governments subject to the approval of the Governor-General in Council". Such nominees came to be called "Statutory Civil Servants". These appointments by nomination, generally speaking, were quite unsatisfactory, as the persons nominated did not possess sufficient educational qualifications and often proved quite incapable of performing their high and responsible duties.

The system of "Statutory Civil Servants", introduced in 1880, did not at all satisfy Indian aspirations and the agitation for simultaneous examinations and lowering of age-limit for admission to the competitive examination grew more and more insistent. These two demands were pressed by the Indian National Congress from its very first session. To deal with this problem the Government of Lord Dufferin constituted, by a Resolution of 4 November, 1886, a Public Services Commission consisting of the President, Sir Charles Aitchison, then Lieutenant-Governor of the Panjab, fifteen members and a secretary. These fifteen members included four Hindu and two Muhammadan gentlemen of high standing. Among the British members, five were from the covenanted civil service and one from the uncovenanted civil service, one had been Chief Justice of the Madras High Court of Judicature and two were British non-officials. The object of the appointment of the Commission was declared, broadly speaking, to be "to devise a scheme which may reasonably be hoped to possess the necessary elements of finality, and to do full justice to the claims of Natives of India to higher and more extensive employment in the public service."[77]

In its recommendations the Public Services Commission considered it "inexpedient to hold an examination in India for the Covenanted Civil Service simultaneously with the examination in London", and affirmed that "the minimum and maximum limits of age for Native candidates at the open competitive examination held in England should be nineteen and twenty-three years respectively". The Commission recommended abolition of the system of filling appointment by means of the 'statutory civil service', which, in its opinion, had failed "to fulfil the expectations anticipated from it", and was "condemned for sufficiently good reasons, not only by particular sections of the native community, but also by the very large majority of officials, both European and native, who have had practical experience of its workings." The Commission also recommended that the term "Covenanted Civil service of India" should be replaced by "Imperial Civil Service of India", and that "the members of the Imperial Civil Service of India should be bound to serve wheresoever and in whatever capacity the government may see fit and should be eligible for any appointment for which the government considered them qualified". The Commission proposed to reduce the list of scheduled posts reserved by the Act of 1861 for members of the Covenanted Civil Service and to transfer some of these posts, called 'Listed posts', to a local service called the Provincial Civil Service for which "local recruitment should be made separately by the Local Governments of the several Provinces to meet their own special require-

-ments, partly by promotion from the subordinate service and partly by new recruitment. Below the Provincial Civil Service there was to be a lower service called the "Subordinate Civil Service".

The Government of India and the Secretary of State approved generally of the recommendations of the Aitchison Commission and the Covenanted Civil Service came to be known henceforth as the "Civil Service of India" (I.C.S.). Rules were issued in 1892 to give effect to the recommendations. Men promoted to the 'Listed posts' would not enter the higher service, but would simply hold the posts, so long reserved for covenanted service, and receive salaries amounting to two-thirds of the I.C.S. men.

For managing the various specialized departments that had sprung up due to the growth of complexity in administration, some new services had been gradually created, viz. those of Education, Public Works, Agriculture, Survey of India, Posts and Telegraphs, Police, Salt, Forest, Public Health, Jails and Civil Hospitals. On the analogy of the Civil Service, these services, too, were classified as Imperial, Provincial and Subordinate.

The reforms recommended by the Aitchison Commission "resulted", as the Islington Commission remarked about thirty years later, "in a great improvement in the standard of every service". But these failed to satisfy the legitimate aspirations of the Indians. The same Commission pointed out: "The inferiority of status and social position which had always been attached to the provincial services, aggravated to some extent by subsequent changes, had been felt by the Indian public as a real grievance, particularly in the case of the more important services such as the civil, educational and public works".[78]

On 2 June, 1893, the House of Commons passed a non-official resolution in favour of simultaneous examinations in England and India for the Indian Civil Service. This resolution was transmitted to the Government of India by the Secretary of State for India, on 22 June, for consideration and opinion. The Government of Lord Lansdowne, after consulting the Provincial Governments, expressed their view against the resolution. They replied to this effect on the 1st November following, and argued "that material reduction of the European staff then employed was incompatible with the safety of British rule". They further urged "that the system of unrestricted competition in examination would not only dangerously weaken the British element in the Civil Service, but would also practically exclude from the service Muhammadans, Sikhs, and other races accustomed to rule by tradition and possessed of exceptional strength of character, but deficient in literary education".[79]

The resolution of the House of Commons, referred to above, was not given effect to. The Home Government agreed with the views of the Government of India, and the Secretary of State, Mr. H. H. Fowler, decided that the claims of the Indians could be met by admitting to such higher posts, as could be made available for them, "those who distinguish themselves by their capacity and trustworthiness in the performance of subordinate duties".[80]

This meant practically no concession to the Indians, and they continued to press their demand for appointment of a larger number among them to the higher services and for simultaneous examinations. Surendranath Banerji declared in his Presidential Address at the eleventh session of the Indian National Congress, held at Poona in 1895: "We claim to be admitted to all competitive examinations for the Indian Services, no matter to what particular Department of the Public Service they might refer. We claim to be admitted to the Competitive examination for the Police Service held in India as well as in England. We claim to be admitted to the examinations for recruitment to the higher offices in the Forest Department. We are excluded from these examinations, and we are excluded because we are natives of India. Our disqualification is our race. The cr .e of colour is alleged against us. .But we are not ashamed of our nationality. We are proud that we are Indians". The agitation of the Indians for larger share in the public services continued throughout the period under review. The Muslim community, however, did not like the idea of the senior services being recruited by open competitive examinations held simultaneously in India and England, as that would mean a Hindu monopoly of posts and power. Sir Syed Ahmad had made a vigorous protest against it and openly declared that if the right of ruling India be decided by a competitive test, the Muslims should be given sword rather than the pen, for the sword is "the pen of our ancestors which is in fact the true pen for writing the decrees of sovereignty". The Muslim members of the Public Services Commission appointed in 1886 joined the European members in opposing the simultaneous examinations.

The position of the Indians in respect of the competitive examination for the I.C.S. may be judged from the following table:

Year	Vacancies	Candidates	Indian Candidates	Successful Indians
1870	40	332	7	1
1880	27	182	2	0
1890	47	205	10	5
1900	62	213	17	2

V. LAW AND JUSTICE.

Reference has been made above to the appointment of a Law Commission under the Charter Act of 1833. When the Company's Charter was again renewed in 1853, another Commission was appointed in England to examine and report on the recommendations of the old Commission within three years. The principal work of this Commission was to prepare the Code of Civil Procedure. In 1859 a bill, based on a draft prepared by the first Indian Law Commission and with revision by the second, became law. In 1860 was passed the Penal Code, on the basis of the draft of the first Commission as revised by Mr. Bethune, the Law Member of the Governor-General's Council, and Sir Barnes Peacock. This Penal Code was followed in 1861 by the Code of Criminal Procedure.

In 1861 a third Law Commission was appointed in England to prepare a "body of substantive law for India" and "also to consider and report on such other matters relating to the reform of the laws of India as might be referred to them by the Secretary of State".[81] The first work of this Commission was the preparation of a draft law of succession, which Henry Maine, as Law Member, carried through the Council in 1865. But their proposals relating to the law of contracts, negotiable instruments, evidence, transfer of property and the Code of Criminal Procedure were not accepted, and they resigned in 1870. Until 1879 the Law Member carried on the work of codification and consolidation of law applicable to each Province These codes have been recast and amended from time to time.

By the time the new law codes were passed, the system of the judicial organization of India had undergone important changes. Until 1861 the Supreme Courts established by Royal Charters in Calcutta, Bombay and Madras had original criminal and civil jurisdiction over all classes within the jurisdiction of the Presidency towns. The chief Civil and Criminal Courts, established by the Company's Government, were called, respectively, Sadar Diwani Adalat and the Sadar Nizamat Adalat in Calcutta, Sadar Adalat and Faujdari Adalat in Madras, and Sadar Diwani Adalat and Sadar Faujdari Adalat in Bombay. By the Indian High Courts Act of 1861,[82] the Crown of England was empowered to establish, by Letters Patent, High Courts in Calcutta, Madras and Bombay. It was provided that on the establishment of these High Courts, all the three Courts in each Presidency, mentioned above, were to be abolished, their powers being transferred to the new High Courts which shall exercise all Civil and Criminal jurisdiction, both original and appellate. Each of these High Courts was "to consist of a Chief Justice and not more than 15 judges, of whom not less than one-third including the

Chief Justice were to be barristers, and not less than one-third were to be members of the Covenanted Civil Service. The remaining vacancies were to be filled up by persons who had been a pleader of a Sadar Court or High Court for not less than ten years. All the Judges were to be appointed by, and to hold office during the pleasure of, the Crown. The High Courts were expressly given superintendence over, and power to frame rules of practice for, all the courts subjected to their appellate jurisdiction". Power was given by the same Act to establish another High Court, and in 1866 a High Court was established at Allahabad for the North-Western Provinces. A Chief Court was established in Lahore by an Act of the Imperial Legislative Council instead of a Royal Charter, and its Judges were appointed by the Governor-General in Council and not by the Crown.

The Indian High Courts Act of 1865 "empowered the Governor-General-in-Council to pass orders altering the limits of the jurisdiction of the several Chartered High Courts and enabling them to exercise their jurisdiction over native Christian subjects of Her Majesty resident in Native States".[63] Between 1865 and 1875 a generally uniform system was introduced in each of the ten Provinces by the Civil Courts Acts. The constitution of the Criminal Courts was made uniform by the regulations of the Criminal Procedure Code of 1872, prepared by Sir James Stephen, then Law Member of the Government of India. The High Courts in several Provinces became the courts of appeal from the district courts, civil and criminal, and their judgment was final except in certain cases in which appeals lay to Her or His Majesty's Council in England and were heard by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council.

The establishment of High Courts did not, however, take away the privileged position enjoyed by the European British subject in Indian law-courts, to which reference has been made above. This iniquity was a festering sore in the body-politic of India and a source of grave discontent against the British administration, but still no effective remedy could be applied on account of the strenuous agitation of the British residents in India. Thus the Britishers in India—even the dregs like Tom, Harry and Dick—could ill treat with impunity even the most highly placed Indians. Though in 1872 they were subjected to the jurisdiction of the *mofussil* courts, they were to be tried only by first class magistrates or judges of their own race, 'while the penalties these could inflict on them were considerably less than in the case of Indians'.[64] Thus a first class magistrate was competent only to inflict a sentence of three months' imprisonment on a European, whereas in regard to an Indian, he could inflict a sen-

tence of imprisonment for two years. A Sessions Court, which had full powers of sentence over Indians, had the power only to pass a sentence of one year's imprisonment on Europeans. For confirmation of death sentences cases had to be referred to High Courts.

Apart from the iniquity of the system itself, the anomaly of these practices became very glaring with the increase in the number of Indian judges and magistrates, who were debarred from taking cognizance of cases regarding Europeans. With experience of Indian cases, appealed to the Privy Council, the Lord Chancellor observed in the House of Lords in 1883 that "in respect of integrity, of learning, of knowledge, of the soundness and satisfactory character of the judgments arrived at, the judgments of the native judges were quite as good as those of the English". Character and integrity of the Indian judges of the High Courts and the subordinate civil courts could not be questioned, and in disposing of cases, better knowledge of the language and habits of the people gave "to the Indian many advantages over the Englishman".[85]

By 1883 the Government thought that the law relating to jurisdiction over European British subjects should be changed. So in that year Mr. (afterwards Sir) Courtney Ilbert, Law Member of the Government of India, introduced a Bill which sought to remove racial distinction by giving the Indian magistrates the power to try European British subjects. The Bill, known after its sponsor as the Ilbert Bill, raised a storm of opposition from the members of the European community in India before which the Government had to bend and to patch up a compromise by Act III of 1884, which meant a "virtual though not avowed abandonment of the measure proposed by the Government."[86]

According to the arrangements of 1884, European subjects might be tried by District Magistrates or Sessions Judges, whether European or Indian. But they could, in every case, however trivial the charge might be, claim to be tried by a jury of which not less than half the number must be Europeans or Americans. As Indians could make no such claim, and it was always extremely difficult, and in most cases impossible, to constitute a proper and impartial British jury in a case against a British accused in most of the *mofussil* towns, the Act of 1884 did not diminish "the privileges of European British subjects charged with offences, and it left their position as exceptional as before".[87] The agitation against the Ilbert Bill was a disgraceful exhibition of jingo mentality of the British in India. It "left a rankling sense of humiliation in the mind of educated India",[88] the effect

of which upon the awakening of national consciousness of the Indians will be described in detail in a later chapter.

VI REVENUE AND FINANCE

1. *General Financial Situation.*

The gross revenues of India increased from £ 36 millions in 1858-9 to £ 51 millions in 1875-6.[69] The land revenue showed an increase of 3 millions, but there was a decrease in 1876-77 on account of the famine in Madras. The gross expenditure increased from 51 to 53 millions. From 1876-77 the annual revenue from, and expenditure on, Productive Public Works and Railways, including guaranteed interests and profits to companies, were shown under gross Revenue and Gross Expenditure. The gross revenue and gross expenditure for the year 1876-77 were, respectively, 56 and 58 millions. But the amount of expenditure incurred in England, generally known as Home Charges, which was 7 millions in 1858-9 and rose to nearly 10 millions in 1875-6, suddenly jumped to more than 13 millions in 1876-7, i.e. nearly 22½ per cent. of the total expenditure and 23 per cent. of the total revenue. The Public Debt in 1857 was 69½ millions. It rose to 139 millions in 1876-77, which included 40 millions of Mutiny debt, and 24 millions on Railways and Irrigation works undertaken by the Government. During the next twenty-five years (1877-78 to 1901-02) the trend of the financial policy continued in the same direction. The gross revenue and land revenue showed an increase, respectively, from 62 and 20 crores of Rupees to 114 and 27 crores. The gross expenditure increased from 66 to 107 crores, and the Home Charges from 16 to 26 crores i.e. nearly one-fourth of the total expenditure. Two other matters, vitally connected with the financial situation, namely appreciation of Rupee in terms of sterling, and the Famine Relief and Insurance taxes, both of which adversely affected the interests of Indian people, will be discussed separately.

The Public Debt also rapidly increased from 1877-8 to 1901-2 as the following tables will show:

Year	Permanent and unfunded Indian Debt	Debt in England
1877-78	Rs. 83 crores	£ 60 millions
1889-90	Rs. 113 crores	£ 96 ,,
1900-01	£ 78 millions	£ 104 ,,
1901-02	£ 93 ,,	£ 134 ,,

The rapid increase in taxation is shown by the following figures.

Heads of Revenue	1856-57	1870-71
	£	£
Land Revenue	20,046,748	24,170,151
Assessed Taxes	108,833	2,072,028
Customs	1,191,985	2,610,789
Salt	3,610,223	6,106,280
Opium	4,988,434	8,045,459
Other Heads of Revenue	1,974,687	6,371,521
Total	£31,920,910	£49,376,225

Thus the result of the first twelve years of Crown Government was an increase in the taxation by more than 50 per cent. "During the last twelve years", wrote the Bombay Association in their petition to the House of Commons, dated March 29, 1871, "the salt tax has been raised 100 per cent. in Madras, 81 per cent. in Bombay, and 50 per cent. in other parts of India; the duty on sugar has been enhanced 100 per cent.; the Abkari or excise on spirits 100 per cent ; the stamp has been repeatedly revised and enhanced, and is now so complicated, vexatious, and excessive, as frequently to lead to a denial of justice; customs duties have been increased several times; heavy court fees and a succession tax of 2 per cent. have been recently imposed; a local land cess of 6¼ per cent, village service cess at the same high rate, rural town cess, taxes on trades and callings, house-tax, tolls; and a considerable variety of municipal and local rates and taxes, amounting in the aggregate to an extremely large and oppressive sum, have been levied in different parts of the country. It is now proposed to impose fresh Local Taxes to supply the deficiency caused by the conduct of the Government of India in curtailing the grant of several Provincial Services Your petitioners submit that over-taxation has, for many years of British Rule, been the bane of India; and that strenuous endeavours have not been made by the authorities to reduce the public expenditure, which has been increased from year to year, until the augmentation now amounts to the vast sum of 19 millions over and above the expenditure of 1856-57".[90]

These additional taxes are generally known as cesses. The principle on which these cesses were imposed may be stated in the words of the Government of India: 'The imperial resources of the empire are unable to provide the large sums necessary for such purposes as extending elementary education among the masses, and of constructing and maintaining roads and other works of public utility; if we are to make roads, to educate the people and keep them clean

and healthy it can only be done by imposing on local resources such a burden as they can conveniently bear.' As often happens, the general principle was formulated as a result of isolated actions. As far back as 1859, the Secretary of State had drawn the attention of the Government of India to the continued neglect of the education of the mass of the people in their own vernaculars. As the system of grants-in-aid failed to encourage such education, he directed the levy of cesses on the land for village schools. Such cesses had been first raised by Mr. Thomason in the N. W. Provinces when he was the Lieutenant-Governor there (1843-53). But gradually the cesses were levied in other Provinces. The *Zamindars* of Bengal tried to avoid it on the ground that their dues were fixed on a permanent basis, but their objections were overruled on the principles mentioned above which were actually formulated by the Government of India with the specific case of Bengal in view.

After the decentralization of finances in 1870, to which reference has been made above, the cesses were resorted to to cover any deficit in the Provincial budget. Thus the limited objectives with which they were originally adopted receded into the background and the cesses became really additional taxation. How it proved to be an intolerable burden on the landowning classes, particularly cultivators, will be discussed in the next section. Nothing presses so severely on an agricultural nation as the numerous cesses which have been imposed on the land in addition to the Land Revenue, since 1871. "The question presents itself", Lord Curzon himself declared, "whether it is not better, as opportunities occur, to mitigate those imposts which are made to press upon the cultivating classes more severely than the law intended".

Dadabhai Naoroji made a comparative estimate of the expenditure of India and the United Kingdom as follows:

"I may put this great financial fact before the Committee. The United Kingdom out of its resources (I use Lord Mayo's word) obtains 70 millions, from which about 27 millions being deducted for interest on Public Debt, there remain about 43 millions for the ordinary wants of the Government. This amount is about 5½ per cent. of the income of the country of 800 millions. The British (Indian) Government out of its resources obtains 50 millions, from which about 8 millions being deducted for interest on Public Debt, Railways &c., there remain 42 millions for its ordinary wants; this makes 14 per cent. of the income of the country of 300 millions. So that the Indian Government is two and a half times more expensive than the Government of the United Kingdom".[91]

These protests were made in vain and there was no reduction in expenditure or taxation. On the other hand, the Decentralisation Scheme of Mayo, mentioned above,[92] led to the imposition of new taxes in the Provinces.

2. *Customs*

Reference has been made above to the customs duties prevalent in 1852. It would appear from the table given on p. 355 that the duty on British cotton and silk piece goods as well as cotton thread, twist and yarn was a half of that on foreign goods of the same kind.

'In 1859, on account of the heavy financial pressure after the Mutiny, all differential tariffs were abolished; duties on all articles of luxury were raised to 20 per cent. *ad valorem;* duties on other articles, including cotton piece goods, were raised to 10 per cent.; and those on cotton twist and yarn to 5 per cent.

In 1860, Mr. James Wilson, the first Finance Minister of India, reduced the 20 per cent. duty on luxuries to 10 per cent., and raised the 5 per cent. duty on cotton twist and yarn to 10 per cent.; so that the import tariff consisted of a uniform rate of 10 per cent. *ad valorem,* with special rates upon beer, wine, spirit, and tobacco.

In 1861, the duty on cotton twist and yarn was reduced to 5 per cent.

In 1862, the duty on cotton twist and yarn was further reduced to 3½ per cent., and the duty on cotton and other manufactures was reduced to 5 per cent.

In 1863, the duty on imported iron was reduced to 1 per cent.

In 1864, the general rate of import duties was reduced from 10 to 7½ per cent.

In 1867, a great number of articles were added to the free list, export duties were abolished from time to time, the only increase being that the duty on grain was raised.

In 1871, a new Tariff Act was passed and the valuations were revised. The import duty on cotton twist and yarn remained 3½ per cent., and that on cotton goods 5 per cent. They were maintained, like other import duties, merely as a source of revenue, and did not operate as a protection to the infant cotton industry of India'.[93]

The import duty on cotton goods which represented an income of about two-thirds of the total income from imports was resented by the manufacturers of cotton goods in England who looked with envy and jealousy, not unmixed with apprehension, on the growth of cotton mills in India. They represented the duty as a protective

duty and sought to have it abolished by bringing pressure upon the Home authorities. So the Manchester Chamber of Commerce addressed a memorial to the Secretary of State for India on 31 January, 1874, and though the Government of India, to whom it was referred, agreed to appoint a committee of revision, the Manchester Chamber demanded total and immediate repeal of the import duties. The time was well chosen. The Gladstone Ministry had become unpopular and dissolved the Parliament in 1874, and in the ensuing General Election of British Parliament the Lancashire votes would count for much. Two extracts from the memorial and the subsequent correspondence on it may be quoted to show the mentality of the memorialists. In the first of these their demand for abolition of duties was put on a philanthropic basis and they shed crocodile tears over the lot of the poor Indians. It runs as follows:

"That the duties increased the cost to the Native population, or at least to the poorest of the people, of their articles of clothing, and thereby interfered with their health, comfort, and general well-being."

The real motive behind the demands of the memorialists, however, peeps through the following:

"The statements as to the baneful operation of these duties on commerce, and on the best interests of Her Majesty's subjects, both in India and in England, are abundantly confirmed by the latest advices from Bombay, which show that, under the protection extended by the levying of duties on imports, to the spinning and weaving of cotton yarns and goods in India, *a large number of new mills are now being projected.*"[1]

The victory of the Conservatives in the General Election of 1874 spelt the doom of cotton mills in India by arresting their growth. As one of the earliest instances of the glaring evils of the Parliamentary control over India, this disgraceful episode of the sacrifice of Indian interest at the altar of British politics, dominated by British industry, may be treated at some length:

"Mr. Disraeli had formed a Conservative Government and Lord Salisbury had succeeded the Duke of Argyll as Secretary of State for India. Lord Salisbury was never a vehement free-trader, but he was vehement in his desire to conciliate Lancashire. In July 1875 he wrote to the Viceroy:

"If it were true that this duty is the means of excluding English competition, and thereby raising the price of a necessary of life to the vast mass of Indian consumers, it is unnecessary for me to remark that it would be open to economical objections of the gravest kind. I do not attribute to it any such effect; but I cannot be insensible to the political evils which arise from the prevalent belief upon the matter.

"These considerations will, I doubt not, commend to your Excellency's mind the policy of removing, at as early a period as the state of your finance permits, this subject of dangerous contention."

On August 5, 1875, Lord Northbrook wired to Lord Salisbury that the new Tariff Act had been passed that day. We quote the first portion of the telegram, detailing the changes.

"Act for revision of customs duties passed this day.

"Export duties abolished, except those on indigo, paddy, rice, and lac, which are unchanged.

"General rate of import duty reduced from 7½ to 5 per cent. Valuations revised.

"No alteration considered necessary in import duty on cotton goods, but their valuation reduced, which diminishes duty by £ 88,000.

"Five per cent. import duty imposed on long staple raw cotton.

"Duty on spirits raised from 3 to 4 rupees a gallon, London proof.

"Duty on sparkling wines raised from 1½ to 2½ rupees, and on other wines, except claret and Burgundy, from 1 to 1¼ rupees a gallon".

"And it was pointed out towards the end of the telegram that the net loss to the Indian revenues by this Act was £ 308,000.

"Lord Salisbury was not yet satisfied. He wired back: "Provisions of Act very important. Some objectionable". And he desired to know why the Act was passed without a previous reference to the Secretary of State, according to Legislative Despatch No. 9 of 1874.

"An unpleasant correspondence then ensued. Lord Northbrook and his Council explained in August 1875 that the matter was urgent and could not be delayed; and that a reference to the Secretary of State would have had the effect of disclosing the intentions of the Indian Government, and caused inconvenience to trade.

"Lord Salisbury was still dissatisfied. He proposed, in November 1875, to send his Under Secretary, Sir Louis Mallet, to India, to confer with the Indian Government in regard to fiscal legislation; and he urged the gradual but complete removal of the import duty on cotton goods.

"Lord Northbrook and his Council replied in February 1876 that it was undersirable to sacrifice a duty "which brings in a revenue of more than £ 800,000;" and that there was "no precedent of a measure so seriously affecting the future of Indian finance as the prospective removal of a tax which brings in a revenue of £ 800,000 per annum, having been directed by the Home Government". "It is our duty," concluded Lord Northbrook and his Council, "to consider the subject with regard to the interests of India; we do not consider that the removal of the import duties upon cotton manufactures is

consistent with those interests; and we hope that the statement contained in this despatch of the whole circumstances of the case, and of the condition of the Indian finance, will show that the real effect of the duty is not what is supposed, and that it cannot be removed without danger to the Indian finances, and that the imposition of new taxes in its stead would create serious discontent."[95]

It may be added that Lord Salisbury had been in such haste to conciliate Lancashire that he forgot even to consult his own Council. The telegraph of Lord Salisbury to the Government of India on 30 September, 1875, pressing for the remission of Indian import duties and proposing to send his Under Secretary to India to carry out this scheme was strongly resented by several members of his Council as they had no opportunity of reading the papers on, far less discussing, the subject. But the members who dissented from Lord Salisbury were in a minority, and so the Secretary of State for India had the support of the majority of his Council in demanding the repeal of the import duties on cotton in India.[96] To make matters easier, Lord Northbrook resigned and was succeeded by Lord Lytton who belonged to the same school of imperialistic politics as Disraeli and Salisbury. So on May 31, 1876, Lord Salisbury sent a despatch to the Government of India communicating his conviction "that the true interests of India, as well as the legitimate claims of English industry, required a reconsideration of the matter; that the complete removal of the duties on cotton goods was essential as soon as the condition of the finances would allow, and that they could not be relied upon as a permanent source of revenue".

But the Government of India, faced with the terrible famine of Madras, hesitated to take action on the line recommended by the Secretary of State. The new Finance Minister, Sir John Strachey, spoke on March 15, 1877:

"Financial embarrassments arising from the depreciation of silver prevented any practical steps being taken last year in this direction. It was thought unwise to give up any revenue at such a time, and the Secretary of State concurred in this decision. It is with great regret that I have to announce that, for reasons similar to those which prevailed a year ago, it has been decided that nothing can be done at the present moment towards the abolition of these duties; the financial difficulties caused by the famine are so serious that we cannot sacrifice any source of income".[97]

But the British politics put a premium on the votes of textile manufacturers of Lancashire. So, in spite of the terrible famine in India, the House of Commons passed the following Resolution:

"That, in the opinion of this House, the duties now levied upon cotton manufactures imported into India, being protective in their nature, are contrary to sound commercial policy, and ought to be repealed without delay, so soon as the financial condition of India will permit".[98]

The last clause was merely an eye-wash, for it was well known that the Government had to impose local cesses to meet their expenditure and no source of revenue had been repealed since 1858.

"Lord Salisbury forwarded the Resolution of the House of Commons to the Indian Government, and referred with something like alarm to the fact 'that five more mills were about to begin work; and that it was estimated that by the end of March 1877 there would be 1,231,284 spindles employed in India'.

"Accordingly, in the following year, the Government of India made a further sacrifice of revenue by exempting from duty some imports with which Indian manufacturers were supposed to compete" But Manchester was not satisfied and demanded that 'all goods made from yarns not finer than 30 s., and all yarns upto 26 s water and 42 s mule' be exempted from duty.[99]

Lord Lytton was ready to accept all these demands. But it is gratifying to put on record, particularly as so much has been written against the members of the I C S. in this history, that a majority of the members of the Governor-General's Council protested strongly against the sacrifice of Indian revenues in a year of famine war, and increasing taxation, and recorded dissenting minutes. The following passage from the minute of Sir Alexander Arbuthnot uncovers the mask:

"The people of India atribute the action which has been taken by Her Majesty's Government in this matter to the influences which have been brought to bear upon it by persons interested in the English cotton trade, in other words, by the manufacturers of Lancashire It is notorious that this impression has prevailed throughout India from the time, just four years ago, when the Marquis of Salisbury informed a large body of Manchester manufacturers that the Government of India would be instructed to provide for the gradual abolition of the import duties on cotton goods.

"Nor is this feeling limited to the Native community. From communications which have been received from the Chambers of Commerce at Madras and Calcutta, it is evident that the feeling is shared by the leading representatives of the European mercantile community in those cities.

"It is equally shared by the great body of the official hierarchy throughout India I am convinced I do not overstate the case when I affirm my belief that there are not at the present time a dozen officials in India who do not regard the policy which has been adopted in this matter as a policy which has been adopted, not in the interests of India, not even in the interests of England, but in the interests or

the supposed interests of a political party, the leaders of which deem it necessary at any cost to retain the political support of the cotton manufacturers of Lancashire.

"During the rule of the East India Company, the Court of Directors furnished what often proved an effective barrier between the interests of the people of India and the pressure of powerful classes in England. In this respect the Council of India, as the Council of the Secretary of State is called, has in no way taken the place of the Court of Directors....The Council of the Governor-General, on the other hand, has large power and heavy responsibilities imposed upon it by law;...It will be an evil day for India when the Members of this Council fail to discharge the duty thus appertaining to them."[99a]

For once the majority of members of the Council of the Governor-General did discharge their duty. But their strong protests had no effect upon Lord Lytton, who took advantage of his constitutional power to override his Council and, in 1879, exempted from import duty all imported cotton goods containing no yarn finer than 30 s. i e. the coarser goods which formed the main product of Indian mills. Only two members supported the Viceroy. The majority of members of the Council of the Secretary of State also disapproved of the action of Lord Lytton. But the Secretary of State upheld the action of the Viceroy against the opinion of the majority. It is perhaps unique in the history of British India that political pressure forced the Government to adopt a measure, harmful to the interest of India, against the opinion of the majority of members of the Councils of both the Viceroy and Secretary of State. Ground was prepared for Lord Lytton's action by an authoritative declaration of the Government's Tariff policy regarding imports made in the financial statement for 1878-79 by its Finance Member, Sir John Strachey, who was one of the two members who supported the iniquitous action of Lord Lytton. The principles laid down by him were:

(i) "That no duty should exist which affords protection to native industry; and as a corollary, that no duty should be applied to any article which can be produced at home without an equivalent duty of excise on the home production; also, that no duty should be levied except for purely fiscal purposes.

(ii) That, as far as possible, the raw materials of industry and articles contributing to production should be exempt from customs taxation.

(iii) That duties should be applied only to articles which yield a revenue of sufficient importance to justify the interference with trade involved by the machinery of collection.[99b]

Lord Lytton gave practical effect to this policy by the abolition of import duties on cotton goods in March, 1879. It was approved by the House of Commons in the following resolution, dated the 4th April, 1879: "That the import duty on cotton goods, being unjust

alike to the Indian consumer and the English producer, ought to be abolished, and this House accepts the recent reduction in these duties as a step towards their total abolition, to which His Majesty's Government are pledged". This policy was fully adopted by the Government of Lord Ripon in 1882 by the abolition of the remaining import duties, with two exceptions, namely, those on wine and salt on which internal duties were levied.

But in the course of a few years, certain factors led the Government to modify this policy. Fall in the price of silver, which formed the standard currency in this country, the demands of the Famine Insurance Fund, the heavy expenses of the Burmese War, and military preparations in the north-west to avert the Russian menace caused much pressure on the financial resources of the Government of India. To meet the deficiency, the Government of India was compelled to revive the old import duties, with certain exceptions, in December, 1894, a five per cent. import duty being imposed on cotton goods and yarns. To protect the interests of the British cotton manufactures a countervailing excise duty of five per cent. *ad valorem* was imposed on cotton yarns manufactured at power mills in India, which alone could compete with Lancashire yarns. But even this did not satisfy Manchester. Once more the Conservative Government which came into power in 1895 yielded. There was another revision of import duties in February, 1896. Duties on cotton yarn were removed. But a duty of 3½ per cent *ad valorem* was imposed on cotton goods imported from abroad, and an excise duty at equivalent rate was imposed on all cotton goods manufactured at mills in India, including the coarse goods which did not compete with any European goods.

The measures noted above seriously affected the true interests of the Indian people, and these evoked protests even from the Council of the Viceroy of India. But the Home Government over-ruled these and soon Sir Henry Fowler, the Secretary of State, declared their policy to be as follows: "When once a certain line of policy has been adopted under the direction of the (British) Government it becomes the clear duty of every member of the Government of India to consider not what that policy ought to be, but how effect may be best given to the policy that has been decided on".

Angry protests were made by all classes—official and non-official, Indian and European. Mr. Playfair, representing the European mercantile community of Calcutta, said:

"Nothing has been produced, therefore, to contradict the views held by honourable members, that competition on the part of Lancashire mills with the production of the coarser fabrics spun and woven in Indian mills does not exist. On the

other hand, further examination in India proves that in reality no competition exists in goods made from yarn below 20 s.

"And after all, what is this Indian trade over which so much contention has unfortunately arisen? An examination of statistics shows that the powerloom spindles in India amount to 1/[illegible] th, and the powerlooms in India to 1/[illegible] th of the world's supply. In relation to Great Britain's equipment, which represents one-half in spindles and one-third in looms of the world's supply, India possesses 1/[illegible] th part of Great Britain's spindles and 1/[illegible] th part of her looms. May India not have this little ewe lamb? My lord, I have every sympathy with the depressed condition of Lancashire trade, and for the welfare of England as well as India, everything that can legitimately be done to afford relief should be granted. But, because Lancashire masters may be alarmed and discontented on account of the state of their affairs, I see no reason why they should unjustly attack a separate industry in India. The proposals under these Bills mean a remission of taxation of 51½ lakhs (or 37 per cent.) on Manchester goods, and an increase of 11 lakhs (or 300 per cent.) of taxation on India-made goods."[illegible]

R. C. Dutt observes.

"As an instance of fiscal injustice, the Indian Act of 1896 is unexampled in any civilised country in modern times. Most civilised Governments protect their home industries by prohibitive duties on foreign goods. The most thorough of Free Trade Governments do not excise home manufactures when imposing a moderate customs duty on imported goods for the purposes of revenue. In India, where an infant industry required protection, even according to the maxims of John Stuart Mill, no protection has ever been given. Moderate customs, levied for the purposes of revenue only, were sacrificed in 1879 and 1882. Home manufactured cotton goods, which were supposed to compete with imported goods, were excised in 1894. And home goods, which did not compete with foreign goods, were excised in 1896. Such is the manner in which the interests of an unrepresented nation are sacrificed."[illegible]

3. *Other sources of Revenue.*

Reference has been made above to the revenue derived from opium. There were occasional fluctuations in the produce of opium and in the revenue derived from it. Such fluctuations became more frequent during the twelve years from 1852. To ensure the stability and steady progress of opium revenue, Sir Cecil Beadon, Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, suggested a policy in 1867 for maintenance of a permanent reserve of the article. This policy was gradually adopted by March, 1879, with regard to Bengal opium, and it produced steadiness of opium supply and increase of opium revenue in the succeeding years. The annual average net (opium) revenue for the five years ending in 1902-3 was £2,860,000, and for the ten years ending in 1907-8, £3,275,000.

Of the revenues of different kinds derived from indirect taxation, duty on salt was the most remunerative. The system under which salt duties were levied varied in different Provinces, and their rates also differed until 1882-3. Thus from 1869 to 1877 the duty in

Lower Bengal was Rs. 3-4 per *maund;* in the Upper Provinces, Rs. 3; and in Madras and Bombay, Rs. 1-13. During the administration of Lord Lytton the inland customs line was abolished and in 1882 the duty on salt was made uniform at the rate of two rupees per *maund.* But in January, 1888, the rate of salt-tax was raised to two and a half rupees per *maund,* and it continued to be so for the next fifteen years. In 1903 it was reduced to two rupees, and in 1905 to one and a half rupees.

The Stamp Revenue and Excise continued as important sources of revenue. But on account of heavy expenditure caused by the outbreak of 1857-8, the Customs duties had to be revised and a new tax, known as Income-Tax, was imposed. It was first imposed in *1860* as a temporary measure, under the advice of Mr. James Wilson, Finance Member of the Governor-General's Council, at the rate of four per cent. on all incomes of Rs 500 and upwards, and at half that rate on incomes between Rs. 200 and Rs. 500. It was abolished in 1865. But again in 1867 a licence tax, which was "in the nature of taxes on income", was levied on trades and professions. But this did not suffice to meet the deficit, and so in 1869 the income-tax was made a general tax. With comparative improvement in finances, it was dropped But after deterioration in the financial resources it was re-introduced as a tax on the commercial and trading classes. Ultimately, in 1886 a tax was imposed throughout India on all incomes excepting those derived from agriculture.

VII. LAND SETTLEMENT

1. *New Settlements.*

A. Awadh.

When Awadh was annexed to British India in 1856, the landlords known as *Talukdars* were the proprietors of estates—a larger or smaller group of villages—comprising a major portion of the Province. There were village communities also, but they were not very much developed. The British Government, however, deliberately ignored the claims of the *Talukdars,* and out of more than 23,000 villages, only 13,000 were settled with the *Talukdars* in 1856, and 9000 were settled with village proprietors. The *Talukdars* became bitter enemies of the Government and the tenants also were oppressed by heavy assessment. As related above,[102] this was the most important factor in causing a wide-spread revolt in Awadh in the wake of the Mutiny of 1857. Reference has also been made, in connection with the above episode, to the forcible re-occupation of their lands by the *Talukdars,* their wholesale confiscation by Canning, and the

strong rebuke administered to him by Lord Ellenborough.[103] This, as well as the opposition by senior members of the Government, induced Lord Canning to rectify his mistake. Sir James Outram induced Canning to add a clause to his proclamation that the Government would view liberally the claims of those *Talukdars* who would promptly surrender. Many submitted and their lands were restored. A regular settlement for thirty years was made between 1860 and 1878 with the *Talukdars*, and this came to be known as the *Talukdari* Settlement.

The outbreak of 1857 also taught another salutary lesson to the Government. Reference has been made above[104] to the resumption of *Inam* lands on a large scale, the resentment and violence caused thereby, and the role it played in the revolt of the civil population in 1857. After the suppression of the outbreak the Government adopted a different policy in the matter. 'A special commissioner was appointed in 1859 to deal with the whole question on liberal lines, and an enormous number of *inams* were enfranchised in the next ten years, the government surrendering its right to resume, claim service, or restrain alienation in return for a quit-rent. There were, however, many confiscated *inams* which were not so enfranchised.'[105]

In the *Talukdari* Settlement, the *Talukdars* were declared the proprietors of their estates, but they had to "admit certain rights and protective conditions, to be secured by record at settlement, for the communities over which they were superior proprietors".[106] Thus sub-proprietory right of village community, or of 'even single members thereof', in relation to the landlord, was recognized. The latter was to receive a fixed annual sum, whereas the former retained control of the land. The first Tenancy Act in Awadh was the Rent Act XIX of 1868. Occupancy rights were granted only to a tenant who could show that he had lost proprietary right within thirty years before annexation. After practical experience of several years it was replaced by the Rent Act XXII of 1868 which came into force from first January, 1887. It laid down that "every non-occupancy tenant (with certain exceptions) admitted before the passing of the Act, has a statutory right to remain on the holding, and with the same rent as he was paying on the 1st January, 1887, for seven years, from the date of the last change in his rent, or the last change in the area of his holding; or, if neither has happened, from the date of admission to his holding".[107]

B. Central Provinces.

As noted above,[108] this Province was created in 1861 by uniting a number of scattered territories which came into the possession of

the British at different times. The early administration of land-settlement in these territories need not be referred to in detail, but the tenants were over-assessed and impoverished to such an extent that the measures were condemned in the strongest terms by the authorities themselves. The following extract from the Settlement Report of Sagar by Col. Maclean will give a general idea of the state of 'Sagar and Nerbudda' Territories during the early years of British rule:

"The Government demands press so heavily upon the people that all enterprise has been crushed, and there is not the slightest attempt at improvement. I have personally satisfied myself that in many instances the Government demand exceeds the gross rental assets of some villages.

"The people have lost heart to that extent that in some instances the rightful owners of hereditary descent refused any terms to accept the proprietary rights of villages.

"The widespread misery and distress throughout this division of the district must be seen to be appreciated, especially at Dhamonee and the part of Benaika Patna.

"The impression conveyed to me on inspecting these tracts was, that the Parganahs were dead, so vast was the desolation, and so scarce the signs of life or of human beings."[109]

The Government of India and the Secretary of State strongly condemned this state of things. "Heavy reductions were granted, and the assessment was reduced. It is to be remarked that although the Government of the day pressed the necessity of reduction, its orders were carried out by the local authorities with a niggardly hand, and concessions made in driblets".[110]

After the new Province was created in 1861, "a new Settlement of the Central Provinces was commenced in earnest. The principles of this Settlement had been laid down, as long ago as 1854, by a Proclamation issued by the Government of the North-Western Provinces for the Sagar and Narbada Territories which were then under that Government. No action had been then taken. It was after the formation of the Central Provinces in 1861 that the old Proclamation of 1854 was taken as the basis for settlement of the land revenue throughout those Provinces.

"The main principle laid down by this Proclamation, and afterwards accepted for the Central Provinces generally, was the recognition of proprietary rights in the Malguzars or revenue-payers. This has often been described as the conferring of a new gift; but it was a new gift only in so far as it admitted, in theory, a right which was enjoyed by the Malguzars in practice. 'I do not know,' said Mr. Chisholm, one of the ablest Settlement Officers of the time, 'any rights appertaining to landed property which the Malguzar indivi-

dually or he and his sharers jointly, did not exercise, except the power of sale and mortgage....'

"Nevertheless it was a great gain when this right, which had been exercised in practice, was expressly admitted; and when power was also given to the Malguzars to sell or mortgage their property".[111]

The settlement of 1863 was made for thirty years, and the Shaharanpur Rules which limited the revenue to one-half of the rental were extended to Sagar and Narbada Territories.

"For Nagpur, the Government of India had sent directions to leave the Malguzars from 35 to 55 per cent. of the gross rental. And it was added that "the Governor-General in Council would be disposed to leave the Malguzars in all cases 40 per cent. for expenses of management and proprietary rights, and to extend the limit in special cases to 50 per cent". These instructions were liberally interpreted by Richard Temple, and in the Settlement Code which he issued, with the sanction of the Governor-General, for application throughout the Central Provinces without any reservation, the only principle of assessment he laid down was the half-rental principle of the Saharanpur rules".'[11]

Unfortunately, this principle was not adhered to in practice. "The Settlement Officers did not accept the actual rental of estates. They estimated what the rental should be from their own calculation; they based the land revenue demand on these estimated rentals; and they communicated the demand to the landlords who were left to raise their rents to the estimated rentals. A more reprehensible system of encouraging landlords to screw up their rents from helpless and ignorant cultivators can scarcely be conceived. In Bengal, in Oudh, and in the Punjab, Lord Canning and Sir John Lawrence had striven to restrict the enhancement of rents by private landlords by special legislation. But Settlement Officers in the Central Provinces and elsewhere adopted a method which encouraged landlords to screw up their rents. The actual proportion of the rental, so calculated, which was demanded as land revenue, was also higher than 50 per cent. in most districts.

"It will thus be seen that the principles laid down for the assessment of the land revenue were violated in a two-fold manner. In the first place, the rental accepted as the basis of assessment was higher than the actual rents received by the landlords; and in the second place, the proportion demanded as revenue exceeded 50 per cent. of this rental in most districts, and was fixed at 78 per cent. in Nagpur itself. Once again the orders of the Government 'were carried out by the local authorities with a niggardly hand.' and the

people had no redress against the violation of rules by the very officers for whom the rules had been framed".[112] Colonel Keatinge, who became Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces in 1871-2, was not in favour of recognizing the Malguzars as proprietors and advocated the Ryotwari system. Though he did not succeed in subverting the system introduced by Sir Richard Temple, he imposed the Ryotwari settlement on Sambalpur. Though Sir Richard Temple had issued orders for a Malguzari Settlement in the District, and proclaimed it in open *durbar*, Keatinge took advantage of the fact that the new settlement had not already been introduced. So Keatinge introduced the Ryotwari Settlement.

"Proprietory rights were denied and withheld. The revenue-payers were to be considered lessees of their villages. They were to be remunerated by permission to hold their home-farms revenue-free. They would further be permitted to keep to themselves rents of waste lands brought under cultivation during the Settlement. And in view of Sir Richard Temple's pledge to regard them as proprietors, they were made proprietors only with regard to their Bhogra lands. The Settlement was made for twelve years only, 1876 to 1888".[113] The Sambalpur Settlement shows how much of even the most important decisions affecting millions of Indians depends on the whims of an individual official.

A Tenancy Act was passed in 1883 in order to protect the rights and interests of the tenants, who were divided into three categories according to their right of occupancy But whereas in Bengal and other Provinces where similar Acts were in operation, it was the landlords who dealt with the tenants, subject to the salutary checks imposed upon them by law, in the Central Provinces the Settlement Officer intervened and settled the rents which the tenants would pay to their landlords. It was the result of the prevailing tendency in official circles, noted above, namely unwillingness to admit the full proprietory rights of the Malguzars, recognized by law.

But a curious situation arose out of this spirit. As the rentals had been fixed by the officials themselves they could not reasonably alter it at the time of the Settlement of 1893, and under the existing rule the land revenue could not be more than half the rental. Faced with this dilemma the Lieutenant-Governor openly admitted "that the Half-Rental rule had been evaded in 1863 by the Settlement Officer assuming a high rental; that the rule could not be evaded at the next Settlement because the rental was now legally defined and fixed; and that the rule therefore must be withdrawn".[114] Mr. Mackenzie therefore asked for a latitude of 50 to 65 per cent. of the rental to be fixed as the land revenue, and this was sanctioned by the

Government of India. To make matters worse, Lord George Hamilton, the Secretary of State for India, decided in 1895 that the period of Settlement should be reduced from thirty to twenty years.

The history of the assessment in Central Provinces has been told in some detail as it shows the gradual changes for the worse in the spirit of administration.

"One by one the three cardinal principles of the Settlement of 1863 were whittled away within thirty-two years. The Proprietory Rights of Malguzars were restricted, and they were stopped from settling the rental of their estates. The Half-rental Rule was abandoned. The Thirty Years' Rule was also abandoned. All the safeguards which had been provided by the Governments of Lord Canning and Sir Richard Temple for the growth of a prosperous landed class and prosperous peasantry were removed one by one under the Governments of Lord Dufferin and Lord Lansdowne".[115]

As a result of the new settlement in 1893 the percentage of increase in land revenue, as compared with that in 1863, was nowhere less than 20 per cent., and rose as high as 105 per cent ; in about 60 per cent. of cases it was above 50 per cent.[116]

2. *Improvement in the old Systems.*

The different systems of land settlement, described in Ch. XII, created a class of intermediaries between the State and the actual cultivators, save in Madras and Bombay, where direct settlements were made with them. The main defects of the other systems were the uncertain condition of the tenants who were absolutely at the mercy of the superior landlords. A series of Acts were passed between 1858 and 1905 to remove these evils and improve the lot of the tenants in various provinces. The general principles involved will be discussed at length in Chapter XXXVII, and a few broad facts alone would be stated here.

A. Bengal.

The first and the most important was the Bengal Rent Act (Act X of 1859). The Act, which was applied to Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, attempted to prevent exaction of excess rent and limited the power of distraint which was arbitrarily exercised by the landlords. Original jurisdiction in suits between landlords and tenants was transferred from the Civil to the Revenue Courts of the Collector and his assistants. The Act also provided for abolition of the landlord's power to compel attendance of ryots at their offices. But these

did not provide adequate security to tenant-right in Bengal. In the absence of any provision for field-to-field survey and preparation of record of rights, the tenants remained subject to serious disabilities in law courts. Further, to prevent the tenants from acquiring occupancy right in any holding, the landlords shifted them from one holding to another, which proved to be a source of great harassment to them and evoked resentment in certain areas. An Act was passed in 1869 with certain amendments in detail, while the principles of the previous Act remained intact. The only important change was the retransfer of the cases between the landlords and the tenants to the Civil Courts. A new Bengal Tenancy Act was passed in 1885 modifying the Act of 1869. According to it, occupancy right could be acquired in any holding by a tenant who had "held for twelve years continuously any land in the village, whether under a lease or not. It need not be the same plot of land (as under Act X of 1859), so that a landlord cannot evade occupancy by shifting the site of the cultivation within the same village". The Act further authorized the Government to pass orders for survey and preparation of record of rights.

The Bengal Tenancy Act of 1885, which was the result of agitation and discussion extending over more than twelve years, may be regarded as the most important measure of land-settlement since the Permanent Settlement of 1793. The ancient agricultural law of Bengal aimed at a fixity of tenure at customary rents. But it was easy for a powerful *Zamindar*, created by the Act of 1793, to treat the *raiyat* merely as a tenant at will, and sometimes enabled a tenant to put obstacles in the way even of a legitimate increase in rent. The Act of 1859 rather added to the difficulty than removed it. In a British court of law, the party on whom lay the burden of proof was rarely sure of success. So this Act made it very difficult for the *raiyat* to establish his right of occupancy, and the *Zamindar*, who sued for the enhancement of his rent, could not easily satisfy the court that the value of the produce had increased in the same proportion in which he asked that his rent should be increased. To both these evils the Act of 1885 afforded a remedy, firstly, by throwing upon the landlord the onus of disproving the *raiyat's* claim to a right of occupancy, and secondly, by making provisions for price-lists which relieved the *Zamindars* of the trouble of proving the rate at which the value of the produce had increased. The Act also laid down rules by which all disputed questions between *Zamindar* and *raiyat* could be reduced to simple issues and decided upon equitable principles

B. North-Western Provinces.

An important change was introduced by the Land Revenue Act (Act XIX) of 1873. "It simplified the law by repealing or modifying over fifty preceding Regulations and Acts; and the revised settlement was concluded under the provisions of this new Act. The older methods of survey were replaced by a cadastral survey; the rental of each estate was revised and corrected by Settlement Officers after local inquiry; and between 45 and 55 per cent. of the rental thus fixed was demanded as the Government Land Revenue... The earlier method of assessment, followed by Bird and Thomason, was to proceed *from aggregate to detail;* the revenue of a fiscal circle was fixed at first, and was then distributed to the villages situated within the circle. The later method, introduced by rules framed under Act XIX of 1873, was to proceed *from detail to aggregate;* the rental of each estate was corrected and fixed by inquiry; and the Government Revenue, assessed on the revised rentals of estates within a fiscal circle, was the revenue of that circle. In other words, the revenue demand in a fiscal circle was fixed by guess-work under the old system; it was fixed on the basis of the revised rentals under the new system."[117]

In spite of considerable improvement there were some defects inherent in the system itself. Any landlord who dealt leniently with his tenants, or was even wrongly supposed to do so, often had his rental increased at the next revision, and this was a direct incentive to him to screw up his rents. An attempt was made to cure this evil by the following rules issued by the Revenue Board. "The assessment of the revenue in each village is to be based, as far as possible, on the actual rentals recorded in village rent rolls, corrected where necessary. The Settlement Officer is not at liberty to add to these rent rolls any estimate on account of a prospective rise in rents or prospective increase in cultivation".[118]

But as in many other cases in British India, there was a wide divergence between professions and pactice. The above rule of 1887 was not adhered to even in the Settlements completed after 1890. To make matters worse, the Revenue Board "issued a circular in 1901, directing that where the rents are inadequate, the Settlement Officer should reject the recorded rental, and base his assessment on an estimated rental. The effect of such a rule is obvious. Where the landlords are disposed to be lenient to cultivators, the rule is a reminder to them to screw up their rents".[119] The evils of such an attitude were clearly indicated in the settlement of 1892, when the actual cash rental was increased in the districts of Badaun, Saharan-

pur, and Mirat, respectively, by forty, eighty-four, and one hundred and seventy-eight thousands of Rupees.

C. The Panjāb.

A peculiar difficulty arose in the Panjāb at the time of the revision of Settlement. "Many landlords, who had failed to register themselves as such at the Settlement of 1853, put forward their claims. To recognize them as landlords would be to degrade those who held under them to the position of tenants-at-will. And it was estimated that in Amritsar District, out of 60,000 heads of families, no less than 46,000 would be so degraded by a recognition of the claims of the landlords"[120] A Tenancy Act (Act XXVII of 1868) was accordingly passed in order to safeguard the rights of the tenants while recognizing the claims of the landlords.

"The Act regulated and defined the position of tenants with rights of occupancy; it protected them against enhancement except under peculiar conditions; it recognised their power to alienate tenures; it limited the privilege of the pre-emption and gave the option to the landlord; and, with almost prophetic apprehension of the points at issue in Ireland, it defined the improvements which might be made by the tenant, and specified the compensation which he might look to receive."[121]

This Act was considerably modified by Act XVI of 1887. But the small proprietors tilling their own land showed a steady decrease from 54 per cent. of the cultivated area in 1891 to 45 per cent. in 1900. A Descent of Jaigir's Act was pased to promote the principles of primogeniture. Another Act, the Punjab Alienation Act, was passed in 1901 to prevent undue and frequent alienation of land from the hands of the agriculturalists to those of the money-lenders and speculators.

D. Madras

Reference has been made above to the grave evils caused by the Ryotwari Settlement in Madras, and the plan of the Government in 1855 to remove the evils by "an accurate survey and careful settlement of the land-revenue". The Court of Directors welcomed the proposal and gave their sanction to it in 1856. The letter, dated 17 December, 1856, enunciated the following general principles which were undoubtedly inspired by a genuine interest in the welfare of the cultivators.

"The urgent necessity of a survey, with a view to the reassessment of the Land Revenue in the greater portion of the districts under your Presidency is, we consider, established beyond the possibility of doubt.

"The officers engaged in the duty of fixing the assessment should always bear in mind that as you have expressed it—'the right of the Government is not a rent which consists of all the surplus produce after paying the costs of cultivation and the profits of the agricultural stocks, but a land revenue only, which ought, if possible, to be so lightly assessed as to leave a surplus or rent to the occupier, whether he, in fact, let the land to others or retain it in his own hands.

"We are therefore of opinion that the assessment should be proportioned to the *net*, and not to the *gross* produce

"The grain assessment having been determined, and converted into money at a fair and moderate rate, we should prefer that the assessment so fixed should be declared unalterable for a term of thirty years (as in Bombay and the North-West Provinces), at the expiration of which period both the amount of the grain assessment, and the rate of its conversion into money, would be subject to readjustment according to existing circumstances."[122]

The Directors proposed that, as in North India, two-thirds of the net produce should be fixed as land revenue. But, as noted above, the land revenue in North India was reduced to fifty per cent. of the net produce in 1855, and in 1864 the Secretary of State for India endorsed it in the following words:

"I am accordingly prepared to give my full support to the proposition of Sir William Denison, that the nett, and not the gross produce, should be adopted as the unit of which the Government is to take a fraction. I have to communicate to your Excellency in Council my deliberate opinion that the share of the nett produce, which may be fairly taken as the due of Government, should be assumed at one-half, and not one-third, as proposed in Sir William Denison's Minute".[123]

The half and half proportion was accordingly accepted in theory in Madras since 1864. But it was not carried into practice in Madras in the settlements between 1861 and 1875. The calculation of net produce involved minute calculation of the expenses of cultivation. The Settlement Department assumed erroneously that 1/3 of the total produce should cover the cost and generally made it proportionate to the value of the land. The ryot was not given the right of appeal to any independent tribunal. The price of produce was lower at the end of the period than at the beginning, which caused further hardship.

The new settlement which commenced in 1861 therefore did not much improve the lot of the tenants. On the other hand, in one respect, the policy dictated by the Court of Directors and adopted in the new settlement was retrogade in character. It has been mentioned above[124] that the Ryotwari Settlement in Madras was a permanent settlement so far as the rent for each field was concerned. That it was fixed in perpetuity was recognized from the very beginning and was acknowledged in unmistakable terms by the authorities. But this was completely ignored by the Directors when they prescribed a revision of the assessment after every thirty years. Even

after the receipt of the Director's letter the Madras Board of Revenue declared that

"the principle of a permanent assessment was still the principle of the Ryotwari System." "A general opinion prevails in England", they wrote in 1857, "that the Bombay Settlement for thirty years secures a far greater permanency of tenure to the landholder than the present Ryotwari tenure of Madras. This is altogether an error, for a Madras Ryot is able to retain his land, perpetually without any increase of assessment, as long as he continues to fulfil his engagements'."

But this principle was violated in practice when the settlements were made for thirty years with the provision that at the end of that term the land revenue of each cultivator was liable to enhancement.

The new settlement had other defects. The Government demand was based on inaccurate calculations, for the officials determined total produce by summary methods and the tenants had no say in the matter. Further, the new lands brought under cultivation were assessed at the prevailing rate, though they were poorer in fertility and produce than the lands already under cultivation. The result was that the land revenue proved to be a heavier taxation after 1860 than it was before. No wonder that remissions had to be made from the Government demand in 1875 to the same extent as in 1860. The following extract from the minute of Sir Louis Mallet, Under-Secretary of State for India, is a sad commentary on the settlement in Madras. "I can only suppose that the answer would be, that in truth the 50 per cent. of the nett produce has been a mere paper instruction, a fiction which has had very little to do with the actual facts of the administration, and that in practice the rates levied have often absorbed the whole rental, and not infrequently, I suspect, encroached on profits also".[126] But the terrible famine that broke out in Madras in 1877 was a still sadder commentary on the new settlement. Between 1876 and 1898, while the area under cutivation rose by 14%, gross demand rose by over 70% (largely due to consolidation of irrigation cess with land revenue since 1887). Marquess of Ripon tried in 1882 to lay down definite rules of enhancement, especially avoiding re-classification of soil and re-assessment of grain values at each recurring settlement, but as will be noted later, it came to nought.

E. Bombay.

The Bombay Government, as will be related later, opposed the idea of Permanent Settlement, but reiterated the view that they did not "advocate any variation in the just and moderate proportion of the gross produce on which the present assessments are based".[127] But, as in other Provinces, there was a wide divergence between

theory and practice, and the evils of periodical settlements appeared in the worst form during the period under review. A few figures, supplied in respect of five *taluks* by an official committee, show the enormous increase in the land revenue in course of the revision of the Settlement which commenced in 1866. The revised assessment at the expiry of thirty years showed an increase of more than 100 per cent. over the collection of the first period of initial Settlement, which itself was considerably in excess of the collection of the first year of the survey. The percentage of increase between the assessment in the last year of the old settlement and the first year of the new settlement—i.e. in a single year—was 53 per cent. in those five *taluks*, and in general above 30 per cent. The Poona Sarbajanik Sabha protested against the high assessment in the following words:

"The assessment should consist of a portion of the nett profits of land, after deducting the expenses of cultivation, including the wages of the cultivator and his family, and the charges for the purchase and renewal of agricultural stock. It has been shown before that the present assessment of the Government, and the charge of the Khote profits in Konkan Districts absorb from one-half to one-third of the gross produce, which by all accounts means that the Government assessment is a rack-rent in the worst sense of the term. In the Desh districts also it has been shown that the Ryot is enabled to continue the cultivation of land from year to year, not because he receives any fraction of the proprietor's rent, or true farmer's profits, but chiefly, if not solely, because he earns the wages of himself and family in its cultivation. In fact there is no surplus produce left, after paying the cost of cultivation (including his wages and the charge for the renewal of agricultural stock) and the assessment of Government".[illegible]

There was a special circumstance which aggravated the evils. The restriction of cotton imports in England from America due to the Civil War stimulated cotton cultivation in Bombay, and this was seized as a good opportunity for enhancing the assessment in the Revision Settlement which commenced in 1866. This temporary sign of prosperity was taken by the officials as permanent. Dadabhai Naoroji, the eminent patriotic Indian leader, about whom more will be said hereafter made an emphatic protest against it. "He said that the signs of prosperity were hollow and ephemeral, and that the enormous increase in the land revenue was oppressive and unjustifiable. Complaints against the new assessment were also universal in the Deccan; but the warning was unheeded.

"The Nemesis came at last. After the conclusion of the Civil War, America once more began to export her cotton to England; cotton cultivation declined in India; prices and wages fell. Cultivators in the Deccan were unable to pay the new and enhanced revenue demanded; money-lenders refused to lend when the credit of cultivators was low, and the law in favour of creditors was restrict-

ed. Agrarian disturbances, such as have seldom been known under the British rule, followed in 1875. Rioting was committed; shops and houses were burnt down; stocks were destroyed."[129]

A commission was appointed by the Government of Bombay to inquire into the causes of the disturbance. It consisted of Auckland Colvin (who later became Lieutenant-Governor of North-Western Provinces and Finance Minister of India) and two members of the Indian Civil Service, Bombay. Colvin, who pointed out the "excessive enhancement of the revised settlements" as one of the causes of the riots, made the following observations:

"The assessment seems to me to be based too purely on arithmetical data, and to be applied with too little regard to the conditions of the agricultural body who are expected to pay it. Now that the tenures have been defined and recorded, the Survey Department naturally looks to enhanced revenues as its *raison d'etre*.

"The Bombay Government, by laying down a maxim of enhancement, has recently tried to meet this anomaly, but has cut rather than solved the difficulty. So large an increase as 100 per cent. on an individual holding, or of 66 per cent. on a village, is still allowed without special sanction of Government."[130]

But all these remonstrances from the public and the officials fell on deaf ears. "They led to no substantial change in the method and procedure of settlements. They led to no remedial measures affording security to cultivators against undue enhancements. They led to no rules for the strict enforcement of the principles of the Land Tax laid down by the Court of Directors and the Secretary of State. The Government declined to frame such rules for its own servants as had been framed to restrict the powers of private landlords in Bengal. The Government sought to relieve the cultivators of the Deccan only by restraining money-lenders. That was the object of the Deccan Agriculturist's Relief Act of 1879".[131]

The Government of Bombay not only did not take any steps to improve the procedure of assessment, but they made the powers of the settlement officers more absolute than before. When in 1873 the High Court of Bombay decided an assessment suit against the Settlement Officer concerned, the Government retorted by passing in 1876 "The Bombay Revenue Jurisdiction Act" which excluded assessment of land revenue from the jurisdiction of all civil courts. A greater defiance of British law and tradition is difficult to imagine.

"Three years after the passing of this Act, the Bombay Land Revenue system was comprehensively treated and legalised in the Revenue Code of 1879. It was an excellent Code, and it clearly affirmed the cultivator's rights of inheritance and transfer in respect of their holdings. But the Code gave no protection against undue enhancements, and no security against excessive assessments in violation of the principles laid down in 1856 and 1864".[132]

Sir William Hunter hit the nail right on the head when he declared openly and strongly from his place in the Governor-General's Council in 1879: "The fundamental difficulty of bringing relief to the Deccan Peasantry is that the Government Assessment does not leave enough food to the cultivator to support himself and his family throughout that year."[133] Indian members of the Bombay Council repeatedly drew the attention of the Government to the wretched condition of the peasantry in Gujarat.

"The Hon. Gokuldas Parekh, a Member of the Legislative Council of Bombay, has shown from the official figures, exhibiting the results of crop experiments made by Government Officials, that among the large class of cultivators in Gujarat, who own holdings of five acres and less and are unable to grow rich rice, the value of their out-turn is not sufficient even in ordinary years to enable them to meet the Government demand, the cost of tillage, and the maintenance expense of their families and cattle. And he also proves that, 'even a large proportion of the cultivators, holding up to ten acres, are unable to get out-turns sufficient for the payment of the cost of cultivation and their maintenance'."[134]

It was not till the famine of 1900 that the Bombay Government, unable by any means to realize the enhanced rent, was forced to lower the assessment in Gujarat.

The Government revenue in Gujarat, according to the Report of the Famine Commission of 1900, represented one-fifth of the gross produce of the soil, nearly double that which private landlords in Bengal obtained as rent from their tenants. Mr. R. C. Dutt described as follows the state of things prevailing in Gujarat.

"I visited Gujarat in March 1903, and made inquiries in some villages in the districts of Kaira, Ahmedabad, Surat, and Broach. The condition of the Peasant Proprietors was wretched beyond description, and the worst of them lived in single rooms with all their family and with hardly any articles of furniture. The cattle they used was often hired; and any property they had was often mortgaged. Calculating the Land Revenue demand in proportion to the produce, in presence of villagers and of village officials, I found that the demand often came to 30 or 40 per cent. of what the cultivators actually reaped in average years'."[135]

The state of things in Gujarat played a vital part in Indian history, for about a quarter of a century later, the oppressed peasants of a small *taluk* in Gujarat fought, with the weapons forged by Mahatma Gandhi, the first battle to secure their rights against the mighty British.

3. *The Cess.*

The local cesses imposed on the soil during the Company's rule were small and insignificant, and were generally based on ancient customs. But immediately after the assumption of the administration of India by the Crown, the Secretary of State for India decided upon imposing a special rate on lands to repay the expense of schools

for the rural population, to which was later added that for building roads. The *Zamindars* of Bengal protested against it as a violation of their rights, and their claims were upheld by the Government of Bengal, eminent jurists and highly placed administrators, who held that the imposition of cesses would be "a breach of faith and the violation of the positive statutory engagement made with these Zamindars at the Permanent Settlement".[136] As a result of this protest the Education Cess was not imposed on land in Bengal, but a Road Cess of 3½ per cent. on the rental was imposed in 1871.

In Provinces where lands were settled for a fixed period of years, the same argument was applicable during the period of the existing tenure. But the difficulty was got over by two methods. In Awadh, for example, the additional cess, it was said, was imposed with the consent of the landlords. But, as Sir Charles Wingfield explained before the Finance Committee, "such consent is never voluntarily given. It is obtained through administrative influence, and it is given because they feel themselves helpless, and from fear of provoking worse measures by resisting a request put to them in that way by the Chief Commissioner".[136a] In some areas the cess was added at the time of the revision of the Settlement. In some Provinces, the Government gave notice that in fixing the assessment of land revenue for 20 or 30 years it retained the power of imposing some additional rates for local expenditure.[137] In some cases, however, no such scruple was felt and cess was added to land-revenue on the ground that it directly benefited the people.

A fillip was given to the imposition of cesses by Local Government under the decentralisation scheme of finance referred to above. Two concrete examples will illustrate it.

"By the arrangements made under the Decentralisation Scheme, a deficit of £48,030 was left to be made up by Local Taxation in the North-Western Provinces. The Lieutenant-Governor was not satisfied with making up this deficit, but exercised the powers conferred upon him to gradually obtain an increase of £102,000 by Local Taxation. And he did this by imposing a cess of 10 per cent. on the Land Revenue at the revision of the settlements, in lieu of the old cesses which came to 5 per cent. only.

"The same thing happened in Madras. The deficit which was left to be made up by Local Taxation by the Decentralisation Order of 1870 was £55,428. The Madras Government passed an Act in the same year by which they imposed a cess of 6¼ per cent. on the rental, estimated to bring them £342,800, instead of £197,106 produced by the old cesses".[138]

These new cesses, to which others could be added at the sweet will of the Local Governments, practically put an end even to the theoretical restriction of State demand to 50 per cent. of the net profits from agriculture. For, other demands under other names were added to it.

Thus in spite of various legislations, mentioned above, to fix the demand upon cultivators, for at least a specified period, their effect was rendered partly nugatory when Local Cesses (for roads, schools, famine insurance, payment of some local officials etc.), varying from 10 to 16 per cent. of the land revenue, were imposed on estates in addition to the land revenue. Even where it was nominally paid by the superior landlords they realized it from the tenants, and for all practical purposes it proved to be an addition to the burden of the already over-assessed cultivators. As the Provincial Governments had indefinite powers to impose such demands on the soil to any extent, the cultivators, under every system, suffered alike from the multiplication of such local cesses.

4. *Futile Agitation for Permanent Settlement.*

It would appear from what has been said above, that one of the main causes of the poverty of the tenants was the uncertainty of assessment, due to periodical revision, and failure, in practice, to restrict the land revenue to one-half of the net produce of land. The early years after the assumption of administration by the Crown were marked by liberal legislations to remedy these defects, though they were not carried out in practice But as years rolled on, even the spirit of legislation changed for the worse. The object of the earlier legislation was to improve the status of cultivator and assure his rights and interests in order to make agriculture prosperous. Far different were the ideas which inspired the administration and legislation of later years. The main object of the Government during the last quarter of the nineteenth century seems to have been "to secure for the State a firmer grip on the produce of the soil, to whittle away both landlord right and tenant right, and to make an agricultural nation more dependent on the unfettered will of the Executive Officer.

"The power of the Revenue Officer and the Settlement Officer has been made more absolute by legislation. The period of Settlements has been cut down from thirty years to twenty years in the Punjab and the Central Provinces. Cultivators in the same Provinces have been restrained from alienating their own holdings. The Government has taken the power of withdrawing the right of transfer in Bombay. The Government settles rent between landlords and tenants in the Central Provinces. The rule of limiting the State-demand to half the nett rent, is, in practice, disregarded in Bombay and in Madras. The rule of limiting State enhancements to the specific and definite ground of a rise in prices has been withdrawn. And a compulsory water-rate, which was condemned by Argyll and Lawrence, has been imposed in Madras, and is consolidated with the land assessment".[30]

There was a general feeling all over India that the Permanent Settlement in Bengal, with the improvements effected by the Act of 1859, offered the best solution of the problem. It imposed a limit on the State-demand from landlords as well as on the latter's demand from tenants, and to both it assured security of tenure and fixity of rent. As a result, the peasants of Bengal were, comparatively speaking, more happy and prosperous than those of the rest of India.

Bitter experience of famines brought home the truth of this simple fact even to the authorities. After the terrible famine of 1860 in Northern India, Lord Canning appointed Colonel Baird Smith to inquire into its causes. In his report Smith "clearly showed that the famine was due, not to want of food in the country, but to the difficulty of the starving people in obtaining the food. And in the second place, he also pointed out that the staying power of the people depended greatly on the land system under which they lived". "No misapprehension" he continued, "can be greater than to suppose that the settlement of the public demand on the land is only lightly, or, as some say, not at all connected with the occurrence of famines. It lies, in reality, far nearer to the root of the matter, because of its intimate and vital relation to the every-day life of the people and to their growth towards prosperity or towards degradation, than any such accessories as canals, or roads, or the like, important though these unquestionably are". The capacity of the people to resist the destructive influence (of drought) is in direct proportion—I would almost say geometrical proportion—to the perfection of the settlement system under which they are living and growing".[140]

"Relying on the facts and figures he had collected, and on his careful inquiries into the state of Northern India as it was then and as it had been before, Colonel Baird Smith recommended a Permanent Settlement of the Land Revenue as a protection against the worst effects of future famines, and as a means of increasing the general revenue of the country with the general prosperity of the people."[140a]

The report of Baird Smith was circulated to all the Provinces for opinion. "The Government of the Punjab was the only Government in Northern India which demurred to the immediate introduction of a Permanent Settlement, because the Province had been brought under British rule only twelve years before, and cultivation was still backward in many of the districts".[141] The Madras Government accepted the principle of fixing the land-tax in perpetuity, but opposed the idea of settling with the *Zamindars* instead of the *ryots*. They even maintained that the *Ryotwari* system was origi-

nally intended to be permanent.[142] The Bombay Government was totally opposed to the idea of Permanent Settlement,[143] while the Central Provinces whole-heartedly approved of the scheme but restricted its application to a district of which three-fourths of the arable area were under cultivation.[144] It was also approved by Mr. Samuel Lang, the Finance Member of the Governor-General's Council. He did not agree with the views of those who argued that the prospective loss in land revenue caused by a Permanent Settlement would be made good by increased revenues from other sources. But in spite of this loss in money, he gave his full support to the proposed scheme of Permanent Settlement for reasons which he stated as follows:

"We do not exist as a Government merely to get the largest revenue we can out of the country, or even to keep the mass of the people in a state of uniform dead level, though it should be tolerably happy and contented one, as a peasant tenantry under a paternal Government.

"If we give a Permanent Settlement, as Mr. Beadon proposes, we lay the foundation for a state of society, not perhaps so easily managed, but far more varied and richer in elements of civilisation and progress. We shall have gradations of society, from the Native noblemen of large territorial possessions down, through the country gentleman of landed estate, to the independent yeoman, the small peasant proprietor, the large tenant with skill and capital on a long lease, the small tenant on a lease, the tenant-at-will, and the day labourer.

"In some districts one class will preponderate, in others a different one, and, on the whole, I do not doubt that, although there may be more hardships, inequalities, and collisions, there will be more life, activity, and progress, than there ever will be where the Government was all in all...

"Nor do I see any reason to fear the effect on revenue. It may be true that we shall not get so much revenue as if we had kept the increase of rent in our own hands, at any rate for the next twenty or thirty years, while it is almost certain to be rapidly increasing. But I have no fear of our being able to get revenue enough provided certain conditions are observed in regard to our land settlement; and I am by no means sure that it is desirable that a Government should appropriate a larger share of the income of a country, or get money more easily, than is really essential to meet the proper objects of a Government".[145]

Sir Charles Wood, the Secretary of State for India, as well as Sir John Lawrence, who was then a member of his Council, wholeheartedly approved of the Permanent Settlement and wrote lengthy minutes enumerating the benefits that were likely to accrue from the measure. Incidentally, the former referred to the "general progress of Bengal in wealth and prosperity", due to the Permanent Settlement introduced in 1793.[146]

When Sir John Lawrence came to India as Viceroy, he took up the question, and the two Secretaries of State who succeeded Sir Charles Wood, namely Earl de Grey and Ripon and Sir Stafford Northcote (1866-7), re-affirmed his decision. On March 23, 1867,

Northcote laid down two rules "to restrict Permanent Settlement in undeveloped tracts and estates:—

"First—No estate shall be permanently settled in which the actual cultivation amounts to less than 80 per cent. of the cultivable or Malgoozaree area; and

"Second—No Permanent Settlement shall be concluded for any estate to which canal irrigation is, in the opinion of the Governor-General in Council, likely to be extended within the next twenty years, and the existing assets of which would thereby be increased in the proportion of 20 per cent".[147]

"Inquiries went on with a view to ascertain what districts or parts of districts in Northern India could be permanently settled under the conditions laid down by Sir Stafford Northcote. In 1869 some cases were reported in which it was shown that a Permanent Settlement, even under the conditions laid down, would cause prospective loss to Government. This was not a new argument; for Sir Stafford Northcote had foreseen such loss, and had declared it to be the final and deliberate decision of Her Majesty's Government that 'this sacrifice they were prepared to make in consideration of the great importance of connecting the interests of the proprietors of the land with the stability of the British Government'. But every passing year of peace weakened the desire to make the sacrifice; and the objection which had been foreseen and disregarded in 1867 seemed to have a greater weight in 1869".[148]

The plain fact seems to be that the cautious bureaucrat, who always thought in terms of finance and maximum revenue and constitutionally shrank from alienating any prospective increment, got the better of the generous paternalist. The issue was shelved and in 1869 a third condition was laid down which deferred permanent settlement as long as the land continued to improve in value, which was the same thing as postponing it till the Day of Judgment. Lord Mayo weakened it by countenancing increase of revenue with increase of prices. Northbrook was for a self-regulating system of assessment, also based on price variations, but would have the quality of soil or the quantity of produce determined once for all and not reassessed at each settlement. The claim of the State was kept indefinite in both cases, hanging like the sword of Damocles on the improving land. Moreover, a struggle had begun between the Bengal School and the Mill School over the issue of land revenue.[149]

In connection with the imposition of a road cess, the Duke of Argyll criticized the Bengal opinion that permanent settlement meant "a permanent promise and guarantee against any and every form of

direct tax upon land or its produce".[150] On the other hand, to avoid income-tax, the bureaucrats and European merchants, who had an able spokesman in the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, Sir George Campbell, wanted to throw the whole burden of taxation on land revenue, "to the extent of absorbing 'Rent' altogether, and leaving nothing but ryots living on the profits of cultivation".[151] Argyll called it the "anti-ownership school" who would have "no middle class, or aristocracy, or owners connected with land" but only the Government and the cultivators.[152] It had an able protagonist in England in Sir Henry Maine, "because he is rather of the Mill School on these questions".[153] Argyll considered this theory of land revenue held by the Mill School as fallacious as the 'Absolutist' theory of Permanent Settlement held by the Bengal School. He took a middle of the road stand and was inclined to a qualified permanent settlement, "provided we leave the door open for gaining legitimate access for taxing purposes to the wealth we should thus create".[154] He wanted to combine the principle of ownership with the principle of financial flexibility. "I hope you will keep up the cess policy", he wrote to Northbrook. "It is the only one which will reconcile the principle of a permanent settlement and a real ownership in land, with the possibility of, nevertheless, exacting from the growing wealth of the land-owners a fair contribution towards the growing expenses of local administration.[155] In its own interest permanent settlement should agree to undertake some reasonable sacrifice. Northbrook, however, knew better. The cess or income-tax, if levied, would be raised by the Zamindars from the rack-renting of the tenantry.[156] The whole burden would be shifted to shoulders least able to bear it.

The controversy killed the proposal. Ripon, in his despatch of 17 October, 1882, tried to bring about a compromise between the Canning-Lawrence school of unconditional permanent settlement and the Mayo-Northbrook school of indefinite increase, by yet another plan of enhancement of revenue on "defined conditions". He would make the revenue permanent in terms of produce but not in terms of cash which would fluctuate with prices.

Ripon's proposal was thus a self-regulating system of assessment, ensuring a fixed share of the produce in perpetuity to the tenants. But nothing availed. The tide had turned and the Secretary of State for India, in his despatch No. 24, dated March 28, 1883, gave the *coup de grâce* to the recommendation made by Lord Canning twenty-one years before. The despatch said, "I concur with your Excellency's Government that the policy laid down in 1862 should now be formally abandoned".[157] Even the modified scheme of Lord Ripon was disapproved by the Secretary of State in 1885.

This episode has been dealt with at some length as an apt illustration of the growing changes in the official attitude towards the one thing which contributed to the happiness and welfare of the peasantry, who constituted nearly 90 per cent. of the Indian population.

But though the curtain was dropped on the agitation for Permanent Settlement, the relation between the tenants on the one hand, and the *Zamindars* or the Government, as the case may be, on the other, continued to be the vexed problem which urgently demanded solution in view of the wretched state of the peasantry.

Even a section of the so-called "sun-dried" bureaucrats could not remain unmoved when the famines of 1877, 1897 and 1900 revealed the miserable condition of the people of India, particularly in those areas where the land revenue was high. In 1900 some retired officers of the Government met in consultation in London and submitted a Memorial to the Secretary of State for India making five suggestions for improvement in land revenue administration in India:

"That no revision of the Land Tax of any Province, or part thereof, should be made within thirty years of the expiration of any former revision".

"Where the Land Revenue is paid by landlords, the principle adopted in the Saharanpur Rule of 1855 whereby the Revenue demand is limited to one-half of the actual rent or assets of such landlords, should be universally applied"

"Where the Land Revenue is paid directly by the cultivators, as in most parts of Madras and Bombay, the Government demand should be limited to 50 per cent of the value of the nett produce, after a liberal deduction for cultivation expenses has been made, and should not ordinarily exceed one-fifth of the gross produce even in those parts of the country where in theory, one-half of the nett is assumed to approximate to one-third of the gross produce"

"That when revision is made in any of those parts of India where the Land Revenue is paid by the cultivators direct to the Government, there should be no increase in the assessment except in cases where the land has increased in value, (1) in consequence of improvements in irrigation works carried out at the expenses of the Government, or (2) on account of a rise in the value of produce based on the average prices of the thirty years preceding such revision".

"Lastly we recommend that a limit be fixed in each Province beyond which it may not be permissible to surcharge the land tax with local cesses. We are of opinion that the Bengal rate of 6¼ per cent. is a fair one, and that in no case should the rate exceed 10 per cent"[158]

About the same time, Mr. R. C. Dutt addressed some open letters to the Viceroy regarding Land Revenue, making suggestions more or less on the above line.[159]

The Memorial was referred by the Secretary of State to the Government of India, and the latter forwarded it to the Local Governments for opinion. True to the traditions of Curzon régime, it was

not thought necessary, at any stage, to consult public opinion on a matter which so vitally affected the welfare of millions of Indian people. The Local Governments defended the systems which they themselves had been working, and, on the basis of these replies, a reply to the Memorial was drawn up in the shape of a Resolution of the Government of India, dated 16 January, 1902, which was largely the handiwork of Lord Curzon.

Curiously enough, the Resolution went out of its way in condemning the Permanent Settlement, though there was no mention of it either in the Memorial or in the letters of Mr. R. C. Dutt. The object of killing this dead horse is not quite clear, but the language and reasoning used by Lord Curzon's Government certainly did not add to their credit.

"At an earlier period", says the Resolution, "the school of thought that is represented by the present critics of the Government of India, advocated the extension of the Permanent Settlement throughout India". "They (the Government of India) cannot conscientiously endorse the proposition that in the interests of the cultivator that system of agrarian tenure should be held up as a public model which is not supported by the experience of any civilised country".[29]

Mr. R.C. Dutt's comment upon it is worth being quoted in full:

"The school of thought" referred to represents the views of such men as Lord Cornwallis and Sir Thomas Munro, Lord Wellesley and Lord Hastings, Lord Canning and Lord Lawrence, Lord Halifax and Lord Iddesleigh; and the fame of these eminent administrators who have built up the Indian Empire by their sympathetic regard for the people no less than by their vigour and wisdom, will survive the sneers of modern Imperialism. And when Lord Curzon adds that a Permanent Settlement of the Land Revenue 'is not supported by the experience of any civilised country', he forgets the history of his own country where the great Pitt made the Land Tax perpetual and redeemable in 1798, five years after Cornwallis had fixed the Land Revenue in Bengal".[30]

No less interesting in this connection are the words of Sir Bartle Frere in defence of Permanent Settlement, even if it meant a loss of revenue:

"If the Crown in England had kept the fee-simple of all lands forfeited by successive civil wars or seized from the Church, there might have been a revenue which would have gone far to carry on the Government without taxes, but would England ever have been the country it is?

"If we have any business at all in the East, it is to try and found something better than the old approved patterns of Oriental despotisms, and to give India the chance at least, of becoming a great independent and intelligent community".[31]

None of the actual demands made in the Memorial were accepted by the Government. But the grounds stated in the Resolution for rejecting them contain a mass of half-truths, misstatements, and specious reasoning, and it is not necessary to refer to them in detail here beyond what has been stated above. Interested readers would

find an able refutation of all the points in the Government Resolution by Mr. R. C. Dutt.[163]

The Indian National Congress voiced the opinion of India in demanding a reform of the land revenue system, and in its sixteenth session at Lahore in 1900 urged upon the Government the necessity, repeatedly pointed out by the Congress, of making the assessment permanent. It continued the agitation even after the Government Resolution of 16 January, 1902.

At the eighteenth session of the Indian National Congress held at Ahmedabad, in the same year (1902), its President, Surendra Nath Banerji, urged that "a moderate land tax, fixed for a reasonably long period, is absolutely essential to the prosperity of our agricultural population, and we must insist upon it, in season and out of season, alike in the interests of the Government and of the people".

In the same session (1902) the Congress adopted the following Resolution:

"That the permanent settlement be extended to such parts of the country, as are now ripe for it, in accordance with the conditions laid down by the Secretary of State for India in Despatches of 1862 and 1867 on the subject, and that reduction of and judicial restrictions on over-assessments be imposed in those parts of India where Government may still deem it inadvisable to extend the permanent settlement".

It is hardly necessary to add that this protest had no effect on the policy of a Government which paid such scant respect to the suggestions of its own experienced officials, mostly Englishmen, whose views, when they went against the policy of the Government must be presumed to have been inspired by a high sense of duty and responsibility.

VIII. FAMINE

1. *Famine Policy of the Government of India*

India has been frequently subjected to horrors and devastations of famine. Natural causes like failure of rains, droughts, floods, hail-storms, crop diseases and locusts have no doubt been largely responsible for these. But other factors such as official indifference and lack of sympathy, heavy burden of taxation, iniquitous land-revenue policy, and general poverty have also aggravated their stings. Men's cruelties have often combined with nature's freaks to accentuate the frightful sufferings of the people.

During about a century of the East India Company's rule, India suffered, in one part of it or another, from several famines and scarcities. But, as the Indian Famine Commission reportd in 1901, no attempt was then made by the Government to grapple with the

famine question, or to construct any system of famine relief. When a famine occurred, the efforts made to relieve distress were usually on a small scale, disconnected and spasmodic. "A little employment was offered to able-bodied, and a little gratuitous relief was distributed to the helpless, from scanty funds collected from the charitably disposed. But there was no systematized and sustained action, and but little expenditure of public money". In 1837, failure of rains caused a severe famine in the upper reaches of the Ganga and the Jamuna. No sufficient measures were adopted by the Government to afford relief to the afflicted, and mortality due to it was very heavy.

After the transfer of the Government from the Company to the Crown, till the end of the nineteenth century, more than twenty famines occurred in British India. One of these was caused by failure of monsoon in 1861 in the North-Western Provinces. An area of 25,000 square miles and a population of 13 millions were affected by it. The Government arranged relief work for the able-bodied and gratuitous relief was provided by the charitable people for those who could not work.

This calamity was followed by the appointment by the Government of a Famine Commission under Colonel Baird Smith. As mentioned above,[164] he regarded the iniquitous land-settlement as one of the chief causes of famines in India. Comparing the results of the famines of 1837 and 1860, he held the view that "the areas affected by the two famines were about the same; the population affected by the later famine was larger; and the other conditions were worse in 1860. Nevertheless, the sufferings and deaths in 1860 were far less than in 1837, because the land system introduced in Northern India, since 1833, was infinitely better than the previous system".[165] But the report of this Commission did not formulate any settled principle and method of famine-relief administration.

In 1866-67 broke out a famine, which is known as the Orissa Famine, as its effects were most dreadful in Orissa; but it affected different parts of the east coast from Calcutta to Madras. The Orissa Famine has been regarded "as the turning point in the history of Indian famines", for it led to the appointment of a Commission of inquiry presided over by Sir George Campbell, the investigation of which formed the foundations of definite famine relief policies. This Commission was asked to inquire into "(1) the causes of the famine; (2) whether timely measures had been taken to meet the evil, and if not, whether there were valid reasons to account for their absence; and (3) in what way such visitations may be prevented or mitigated in the future".[166] Referring to the "extreme severity" of the Orissa

famine, Sir George Campbell remarks: "We were shocked by the human remains we saw all round. From an Indian point of view the area of very intense famine was rather small, being confined to a few millions of people; and the period of intensity was short, being no more than a single half year. But within these limits, it was, I think, by far the most acute famine experienced in any part of India in the present (19th) century".[167]

The causes of the Orissa Famine were "the failure of the later rains of 1865, and consequently of the autumn crops of that year, together with the almost entire absence of importation of food from the outside".[168] Proper steps were not taken by the Government to avert its devastating effects. The Commission presided over by Sir George Campbell felt bound to report that timely and adequate measures had not been taken to meet the evil, and that for their absence, blame must be distributed among a good many people, including the highest Bengal officers of the time. The Bengal Government had completely miscalculated the situation and had misled the Central Government.[169] "Some of the local officers", writes Campbell, "raised alarms of famine early in the day, but they were overruled, and it was not till well on in the spring of 1866 that the extent of the danger was properly realised. When the extreme famine did come, it came very suddenly, showing how thin a line divides scarcity from the severest famine. In April, 1866, the Magistrate of Cuttack still reported that there was no ground for the most serious apprehension. A few days later, in May, he and his followers were almost starved. We compared it to the case of a ship where the stores were suddenly found to have run out".[170]

The Commission made certain recommendations regarding measures to be adopted for prevention of famine disasters in future, which in certain respects anticipated those of the Commission of 1880. It "dwelt much on the necessity of efficient means of communication as the best means of prevention—new railways through populous districts—doubling the existing lines where the traffic was very heavy—feeder roads, and making the canals navigable; and for Orissa specially, improvement of the harbours". It also "pressed the advantage of security of tenures for cultivators", and advocated "irrigation within reasonable limits, but warned the Government against relying upon that as a panacea for all evils". The Commission further stressed that the Government must undertake responsibility for famine relief, and "that adequate financial provision must be made for a heavy expenditure in famine relief at recurring periods". Various modes of relief, specially employment in useful public work, import of food, etc. were also discussed.[171]

When in 1868-69, failure of rains caused an intense famine in Rajputana and also affected parts of the North-Western Provinces and the Panjāb, the Government took some steps to relieve distress of the sufferers.

In 1873 the monsoon failed prematurely from September in North Bihar, "quite the most populous part in India", and to a less extent in certain other parts, producing disastrous effect on the winter rice crop and making the prospects for spring crops bad. Sir George Campbell, then Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, came to Patna for making enquiries and, on the 23rd October, officially reported "the gravest apprehensions of general scarcity throughout the country, and of worse evils in large parts of it".[172] He wanted to prohibit export of rice from Bengal overseas, the failure of crops being confined largely to the north-western districts of the Bengal Government. He "wished then to save all that was available in the south-east, and, as it were, to dam it up and drive it to the northward".[173] But Lord Northbrook, the then Viceroy, did not accept this proposal and the Central Government, with the approval of the Secretary of State for India, arranged to import 480,000 tons of rice, mostly from Burma, to be distributed in the famine area which was estimated to be 40,000 square miles with a population of 17 millions.[174] The Lieutenant-Governor and the Central Government, however, agreed on measures of relief. "Relief was administered mainly in the form of employment on works and of gratuitous assistance to the infirm. Cultivators were invited to take loans of money or rice repayable without interests".[175] Charitable relief was arranged for people unable to work, after inquiry into each individual case. Thus the principle of affording relief to famine-stricken areas was asserted.

But soon there was a reaction to this policy during the period of the next great famine in 1876-78. It affected part of the Native State of Hyderabad, Madras and almost the whole of Mysore and the Bombay Deccan, and later, the North-Western Provinces, Awadh, and the Panjāb. In this famine "relief was to a large extent insufficient and to a large extent imperfectly organized".[176] The "system adopted in 1876-77", remarks Sir George Campbell, "was not successful in combating famine and preventing mortality; on the contrary, mortality was enormous while the expenditure was at the same time very great".[177] That the relief in some areas was not commensurate with the money spent was admitted by the Governor-General who wrote to Queen Victoria on 11 October, 1877: "Whilst the Madras Famine has cost the Government of India over ten millions, the Bombay famine, under General Kennedy's management, has cost

only four millions, although a much larger saving of human life has been effected in Bombay than in Madras".[178]

The Governor-General, Lord Lytton, rightly realized the need of deciding general principles of famine relief, and in 1878 appointed a Commission for this purpose under the chairmanship of General Sir Richard Strachey. Reporting in 1880, this Commission formulated some general principles of famine relief, and also suggested certain measures of a preventive or protective nature. It "recognised to the full the obligation imposed on the state to offer to the necessitous the means of relief in times of famine". But the cardinal principle of its policy was "that this relief should be so administered as not to check the growth of thrift or self-reliance among the people, or to impair the structure of society, which, resting as it does in India upon the moral obligation of material assistance, is admirably adapted for common effort against a common misfortune".[179] "The great object", the Commission said, "of saving life and giving protection from extreme suffering may not only be as well secured but in fact will be far better secured, if proper care be taken to prevent the abuse and demoralisation which all experience shows to be the consequence of ill-directed and excessive distribution of charitable relief".

According to the Commission's recommendations relief was to be administered by providing work for the able-bodied men, and distributing money or food to the aged and infirm. These works "should be of permanent utility and capable of employing a considerable number of persons for a considerable period". Works like excavation of tanks or raising of embankments in villages might be given to persons not fit to go out for larger works. Schemes of relief work should be kept ready from before so that these can be put into operation immediately on the outbreak of a famine. Employment on works must be provided to persons before their physical efficiency was impaired through starvation. Government was to rely on private trade for supply and distribution of food and should give it all possible facilities. The Commission suggested relief for tenants in times of famine by suspensions and remissions of land revenue and rents and by grant of loan for purchases of seed-grain and bullocks. The Commission further held that the "cost of relief must be so localized as to bring home to its administrators a sense of personal responsibility for expenditure. The sense of responsibility would be most effectually quickened by throwing the burden of famine expenditure on to local taxation and administering relief through representative members of the tax-paying body, themselves responsible for providing all needful funds".

To meet large unforeseen expenditure on account of famines, Government decided to provide fifteen millions of rupees every year in the Budget under the head 'Famine Relief and Insurance'.

In the spirit of the recommendations of the Strachey Commission a Provincial Famine Code was framed in 1883 and the lines on which famine relief would be administered were determined. The principles of the Famine Code were put to a 'crucial test' in the minor famines in different parts of India that occurred in subsequent years and the acute famines of 1896-97 and 1899-1900 The famine of 1896 97, caused by failure of rains, affected, in varying degrees, the North-Western Provinces and Awadh, Bihar, the Central Provinces, Madras and Bombay; the area in which sufferings of the people were extreme extending over 125,000 square miles with a population of thirty-four millions. After this famine another Commission was appointed in 1898, with Sir James Lyall, ex-Lieutenant-Governor of the Panjāb, as its President It conducted an elaborate inquiry into the causes of the famines and endorsed the principles enunciated by the Commission of 1880, suggesting certain changes in their actual working "It may be said of India as a whole", this Commission remarked, "that of late years, owing to high prices there has been a considerable increase in the incomes of the land-holding and cultivating classes, and their standard of comfort and expenditure has also risen. With the rise in transfer-value of their holdings, their credit has also expanded. During recent famines they have shown greater powers of resistance. The poorer professional classes suffer severely from rise of prices, but do not come on relief. The wages of day-labourers and skilled artisans have not risen The rise in prices of food has not been accompanied by a rise in the wages of labour On the contrary, as competition falls off, the rate of wages offered falls frequently below the customary rate".

Before the recommendations of the Lyall Commission could be considered by the Government, the south-west monsoon failed completely and India was visited by a drought, which, as Sir John Elliot the Government Meteorologist, afterwards estimated, was "the greatest in extent and intensity" which India had "experienced during the last 200 years".[180] It caused a terrible famine The affected parts covered an area extending over 400,000 square miles with a population of 25 millions in British India and 35 millions in the Native States. The area included the greater part of the Bombay Presidency, the whole of the Central Provinces, Berar and much of the Panjāb, Rajputana, the Nizam's territories, Baroda, and the Central Indian principalities. Relief measures were undertaken on a wide and liberal scale. Addressing the Legislative Council on 19

October, 1900, the Viceroy, Lord Curzon, estimated that one-fourth of the entire population of India had come, to a greater or less degree, within the radius of relief operations. The relief operations were followed by Lord Curzon's personal tours in some severely affected areas.

The agonies of the famine, accompanied by devastations, pestilence and deaths, led the Government to think of a settled famine policy. So another Famine Commission was appointed in 1900 with Sir Anthony (afterwards Lord) MacDonnell, Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces and Chief Commissioner of Awadh, as Chairman. This Commission was directed to examine, in the light of new experience then gained, "the administration of relief in all its branches, the cost of the recent operations, and the extent of the mortality; to consider what new problems have arisen, and how far events confirm the wisdom, or suggest the amendment, of the recommendations made by the last Commission". It was also required "to deal, in their broad aspects, with the questions of the collection of the land revenue and the grant of advances to the agriculturists; to investigate the existing practice with regard to loans to cultivators in the several provinces; and to advise as to the necessity for revised instructions on these important subjects."[163a] Submitting its report in 1901, the Commission endorsed on the whole the principles enunciated in 1880, and put special emphasis on the great importance of moral strategy "for putting heart into the people". "It is scarcely possible", the Commission observed, "to overstate the tonic effect upon the people of early preparations, of an early enlistment of non-official agency, of liberal advances in the earliest stages, and of early action in regard to suspensions of revenue"[163b] For "uniformity of procedure" and "promptitude in action" with regard to extensive relief measures, the Commission recommended the appointment of a Famine Commissioner where the head of the Local Administration could not be his own Famine Commissioner The more important recommendations of the Commission were·

(a) Prudent administration of the system of advances by Government.

(b) Suspensions and remissions of revenue as a preventive measure of constant application in adverse years.

(c) Establishment of Agricultural banks for the benefit of the cultivators.

(d) Agricultural development and improvement through effective working of the Agricultural Departments.

(e) Extensive irrigation works.

(f) The greater use of non-official agency for distribution of relief.

(g) In certain circumstances preference to local works in rural areas over large public works which had been hitherto the main feature of relief operations.

The Government accepted these recommendations and many of these were embodied in provincial famine codes

2. *Root Causes of Famine.*

While famines were raging with ever increasing frequency and intensity, the Government contented itself with appointing Famine Commissions, and adopting, as best it could, the temporary measures of alleviation suggested by them. But the Government never tried to understand—at least affected not to understand,—the root causes of the famine The most important was the lack of industry and manufacture which forced a much larger number of people to take to agriculture than it could support. These people, practically 80 or 90 per cent of the population, had no other industry to look to for support. This point was brought out in the Famine Commission Report of 1880, as the following passage will show:

"At the root of much of the poverty of the people of India, and of the risks to which they are exposed in seasons of scarcity, lies the unfortunate circumstance that agriculture forms almost the sole occupation of the mass of the population, and that no remedy for present evils can be complete which does not include the introduction of a diversity of occupations, through which the surplus population may be drawn from agricultural pursuits and led to find the means of subsistence in manufactures or some such employments".

But, as has been shown above, far from encouraging industry and manufacture in India, the British Government used its political power to stifle even the infant industry and manufacture which the Indians tried to set up against heavy odds. It was Lord Lytton who appointed the Commission of 1880, from whose report the above extract is quoted. He adopted the temporary and tinkering relief measures recommended by the Commission, but had no hesitation in stabbing the infant Indian textile industry at the back at the dictation of Manchester, supported by the Home Government. There is no doubt that the promotion of trade, industry, and manufacture of the Indians would have been the most effective remedy against famine But it clashed directly with the interests of Britain The Government of India therefore not only took no step in this direction and thus failed to do the elementary duty of every civilized Government, but did not even hesitate to take measures adversely affecting the economic interests of India.

While the ruin of manufacture and industry forced the masses to take to agriculture as the only means of support, the heavy land revenue filled the cup of their misery. As a consequence of the very heavy assessment of land revenue noted above,[181] the cultivators in most parts of India could not get even two square meals a day, and could hardly lay by anything against bad days. So when natural causes led to failure of crops, as they do in every country, Indian cultivators had no resisting power to tide over the evil days, and simply died like fleas in thousands. The close connection between the assessment of land-revenue and the incidence of deaths from famine was pointed out by Government officials themselves;[182] but the Government clung to the oppressive land revenue policy against the unanimous protest of the Indians and even admonition of retired senior British officials, as noted above.[183]

Another significant feature of the Government policy remains to be noticed in this connection. It is the "rising export of food grains from starving India. The export of food grains, principally rice and wheat, rose from £858,000 in 1849 to £3.8 million by 1858, £7.9 million by 1877, £9.3 million by 1901, and £19.3 million in 1914, or an increase twenty-two times over".[184]

As noted above, the policy was so obstinately pursued by the Government of India that they turned down the proposal of Sir George Campbell, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, to stop the export of rice from this province, a part of which was then in the grip of a terrible famine. Sir George remarks: "I have no doubt that in any other country than a British-governed country it would have been done.....Lord Northbrook, bred in the strictest sect of English free-traders, looked on my proposal as a sort of abominable heresy—was as much shocked as a bishop might be with a clergy man who denied all the thirty-nine articles." Ultimately the Government decided to meet the emergency by the purchase and import of food rather than by prohibition of export. Commenting on this curious procedure of importing rice with one hand and exporting it with the other, Sir George observes: "I have often thought over the matter, and to this day I am not convinced that the decision was right. I still incline to the belief that millions of money were sacrificed to an idea, and great efforts and labour were rendered necessary, when a very simple order prohibiting exports would have done almost all that was required by a self-acting process."[185]

It is not perhaps a mere coincidence that the increase in the export of food-grains from India went on *pari passu* with the increase in the frequency and intensity of famines. "In the first half of the nineteenth century there were seven famines, with an esti-

mated total of 1½ million deaths from famine. In the second half of the nineteenth century there were twenty-four famines (six between 1851 and 1875, and eighteen between 1876 and 1900), with an estimated total, according to official records, of over 20 million deaths." "Stated roughly, famines and scarcities have been four times as numerous during the last thirty years of the nineteenth century as they were one hundred years earlier, and four times more widespread". W. S. Lilley, in his *India and its Problems*, gives the following approximate figures on the basis of official estimates:[186]

Years	Famine Deaths
1800-25	1,000,000
1825-50	400,000
1850-75	5,000,000
1875-1900	15,000,000

In the light of all this, the efforts of the Government of India to alleviate the sufferings of the famines lose all humane character and may, at best, be regarded as an humble and inadequate effort to expiate its own grave sins of omission and commission. A cynic might well be excused in describing the Government famine-policy as a sham and a mockery, as much as the ostentatious effort to fill a pitcher, with a big hole, by pouring occasionally glassfuls of water in it to minister to the needs of the thirsty.

IX. POLICE AND PRISON.

1. *Police.*

Reorganization of the police system, like that of other branches of the administration, received due attention of the Government after 1858. In August, 1860, the Government of India appointed a Commission to investigate into the whole subject of police administration in India and to make suitable recommendations for increasing its efficiency and reducing its high expenditure. The Commission recommended "the abolition of the Military police as a separate organization, and the constitution of a single homogeneous force of civil constabulary for the performance of all duties which could not properly be assigned to the Military arm. To secure unity of action and identity of system, the general management of the force in each Province was entrusted to an Inspector-General. The police in each district were to be under a District Superintendent, who, in the large districts, would have an Assistant District Superintendent, both these officers being Europeans. The subordinate force consisted of Inspectors, Head Constables, Sergeants and Constables, the Head Constable being in charge of a police-station, and the Inspector of a group of stations". The Commission further recommended

that "the Commissioners of Divisions should cease to be Superintendents of Police", that no Magistrate of lower grade than the District Magistrate should exercise police functions, and that the village police should be retained on their existing footing, being brought, however, into direct relationship with the general constabulary.

The recommendations of this Commission were embodied in the Police Act of 1861. In reorganizing the Police system in the different Provinces of India, the provisions of this Act have been mainly followed except in Bombay, where, by section 13 of the District Police Act, the District Superintendent and his staff were placed "under the command and control of the Magistrate of the district", who in turn was "subject to the lawful orders of the Commissioner." An Inspector-General of Police was appointed in Bombay in 1885. But the Revenue Commissioners there still possessed large powers of direction and control.

When the police was reorganized after 1861, its officers were largely recruited from the ranks of the Indian army. But for certain reasons recruitment from this source was gradually stopped and police officers were appointed by nomination only. This mode of appointment was condemned by the Police Service Commission of 1886-87, and from 1893 the system of appointment by open competition was introduced in England and India, and some officers already in Government service were promoted.

But, in spite of all this, the police administration continued to be inefficient and corrupt. The main reasons for this were pointed out by the Police Commission of 1902-03: "It has failed for these among other reasons: that the extent to which the village police must co-operate with the regular police has been lost sight of, and an attempt has almost everywhere been made to do all the police work through the officers of the department; that the importance of police work has been under-estimated and responsible duties have ordinarily been entrusted to untrained and ill-educated officers recruited in the lowest ranks from the lower strata of society; that supervision has been defective owing to the failure to appoint even the staff contemplated by the law, and to increase that staff with the growing necessities of administration; that the superior officers of the department have been insufficiently trained, and have been allowed from various causes to get out of acquaintance and sympathy with the people and out of touch even with their own subordinates; and that their sense of responsibility has been weakened by a degree of interference never contemplated by the authors of the system".

In conformity with the Resolutions of the Government of India, dated 9 July, 1902, and with the approval of the Secretary of State.

Lord Curzon appointed a Commission with Sir Andrew Fraser as President and Mr. Stuart (afterwards Sir Harold) as Secretary, to inquire into the state of police administration in India. The Commission worked for seven and a half months and visited all Provinces of British India except Baluchistan. Its report was signed on 30 May, 1903.

The most important recommendations of the Commission were: (1) "That the police force should consist of (a) a European Service, to be recruited entirely in England; (b) a Provincial Service, to be recruited entirely in India; and (c) an Upper Subordinate Service, consisting of Inspectors and Sub-Inspectors; and (d) a Lower Subordinate service, consisting of Head Constables and Constables". (2) "That the office of the Inspector-General should ordinarily be held by a selected District Magistrate, and that the Inspector-General of Bombay should be given the same powers as are exercised by Inspector-General in other provinces". (3) "That all the large provinces should be divided into ranges and that a Deputy Inspector-General should be placed in full administrative charge of each range." (4) "That no officer of lower grade than that of Superintendent should be placed in charge of the police of a district." (5) "That on the analogy of the Provincial Civil Service a grade of Deputy-Superintendents of Police should be created, the status of these officers being the same as that of Assistant Superintendents." Some other recommendations were, (1) formation of the Provincial Department of Criminal Investigation and amalgamation of special branch with it, (2) division of districts into circles each under the charge of an Inspector: (3) recruitment of a large number of Sub-Inspectors who were to be in charge of police stations, and appointment of junior Sub-Inspectors to assist them in investigation work; (4) Head Constables not to undertake investigation but to render general assistance to the Sub-Inspector, such as escort, guards, patrols etc; (5) grant of increments of pay to Head Constables and Constables: (6) organization of Railway Police on the lines of the district police; (7) discontinuance of Municipal or cantonment Police but not of Presidency Police; (8) non-interference of the Divisional Commissioners in the details of police administration, but continuance of the general control and direction of the District Magistrate over the police of the District as before.

The major recommendations were implemented by the Government. This may have contributed to efficiency in certain respects. But corruptions were not removed and there was much to be done yet to reform the police system in order to make it conducive to the real interests of the people.

2. *Jails.*

No improvement was effected in the administration of jails till the position was reviewed by a (the second) Prison Committee appointed by Sir John Lawrence in 1864. Its report followed the same lines as that of the (first) Prison Committee of 1838, mentioned above.[107] It laid down the scheme which was given effect to and had been in force during the period under review. Separate Acts were passed in different Provinces for regulation of prisons, and consequently the practices differed considerably in different parts of India. In 1876 Lord Lytton appointed a third Prison Committee, and a Bill was prepared on the basis of its recommendations, but the Bill never became law and the question was allowed to drop. In the time of Lord Dufferin experienced officers were appointed to visit the jails of the different Provinces, in order to inquire on the spot into matters relating to health, discipline and general administration. After an exhaustive inquiry they submitted a report in 1889, dealing therein with the various aspects of prison administration. This was followed by a conference of experts on prison reform in 1892. A General Prison Act was passed in 1894, and rules under it were issued by the Government of India and the local Governments These continued to regulate jail administration in India in the succeeding years.

The following extracts from the official Gazetteer give a general idea of the system of prisons in India.

"The forms of imprisonment authorized by the Indian Penal Code are transportation, penal servitude, rigorous imprisonment (i.e. with labour), and simple imprisonment. When rigorous imprisonment is inflicted, the court may also order solitary confinement during a portion of the sentence Accommodation in the jails has also to be provided for civil and under-trial prisoners

"There are several grades of Indian jails. In the first place, large Central jails for convicts sentenced to more than one year's imprisonment; secondly, the jails at the head-quarters of Districts; and, thirdly, subsidiary jails in the interior of Districts for under-trial prisoners and convicts under short sentences of imprisonment. In 1903 British India contained forty Central jails, 192 District jails, and 498 subsidiary jails and lock-ups.

"The Jail department in each Province is under the control of an Inspector-General, who is generally an officer of the Indian Medical Service with jail experience, and the Superintendents of Central jails are usually recruited from the same service. The District jail is under the charge of the Civil Surgeon and is frequently inspected by the District Magistrate The staff under the Superintendent includes, in large Central jails, a Deputy-Superintendent to supervise the jail manufactures, and in all Central and District Jails, one or more subordinate medical officers.

"The executive staff is divided into two classes. The higher class consists of jailors and deputy and assistant jailors, who form a single Provincial service with promotion from one grade to another. The lower class comprised the warders

for the supervision and guard of prisoners; they also form a graded local service. Convict petty-officers are employed in all Central and District Jails...

"The general characteristic of the Indian prison system is confinement in association by day and night. The desirability of separate confinement by night, and of cellular confinement during the first part of long, and the whole of short, sentences, is recognized.. ......Prisoners are kept separate under the following classes: persons under trial, females, juveniles, civil prisoners, ordinary convicts, habitual offenders, and sick prisoners. Prisoners under sentence of labour rise at daybreak, take their early meal, work through the morning, are allowed a mid-day interval for rest and food, work again until evening, and , after a third meal, are locked up for the night. The hours of work amount to about nine a day.

"There are three classes of labour—hard, medium and light; and a prisoner is employed on one or another class according to his physical capacity Work is mostly carried on within the jail walls, but convicts are sometimes employed near the jail, and extra-mural employment on a more extensive scale is approved in the case of projects so large as to make it worth while to erect special accommodation. Within the walls prisoners are employed on jail service and repairs, and in workshops The main principle laid down with regard to jail manufactures is that the work must be penal and industrial. The industries are on a large scale, and multifarious employments are condemned, while care is taken that the jail shall not compete with local trade As far as possible, industries are adapted to the requirements of the consuming public departments; and printing, tent-making, and the manufacture of clothing are among the commonest employments.

"Female prisoners are confined in separate wards of the ordinary jails, under the charge of female warders They are subjected to the same discipline as male convicts, the tasks being apportioned to their smaller strength. They are not transferred to Central jails so freely as males, as it is considered inadvisable, except in the case of long-term convicts, to send women to places at a distance from their homes Lahore contains a special jail for female convicts.

"Boy convicts are confined in special wards, and are divided into children and adolescents. The latter class are kept separate, sleep in cubicles, and are provided with schooling and industrial education.

"Transportation is an old punishment of the British Indian criminal law Bengal Regulation IV of 1797 authorized the Nizamat Adalat (or superior criminal court) to sentence criminals to transportation beyond the seas. Several places were appointed for the reception of Indian transported convicts, and in 1838 Singapore, Penang, Malacca, Tenasserim, and the Mauritius were used for this purpose. The treatment of the convicts was lenient, and the discipline lax. The Prisons Commission of 1838 approved of the transportation of life convicts, largely on the ground of the terror inspired by banishment to a distant and unknown land. This terror has in a great measure disappeared, but on the other hand the rigour of the system has been much increased. Port Blair in the Andaman Islands is now the only penal settlement. It was first used in 1858 for Mutiny prisoners, and was opened to general convicts in 1863. In 1902-3 the daily average convict population amounted to 12,182 men and 740 women. Under existing rules male convicts sentenced to transportation for life, or for a term of years of which six have still to run, are transported to the Andamans provided that they are medically fit. Females are transported if sentenced to transportation for seven years or upwards. Ordinarily male convicts sentenced to transportation for life are released, if they have behaved well, after twenty years' imprisonment, and persons convicted of dacoity and other organized crime after twenty-five; but in both cases it is generally essential

that fifteen years of the period should be passed in the settlement. Thugs and professional prisoners are never released. Well-behaved female convicts are released after fifteen years, and in the case of local marriage husband and wife are liberated at the same time... The settlement is administered by a Superintendent aided by a staff of European assistants and native subordinates".[188]

X. LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT.

1. *Rural areas.*

As noted in the earlier volumes[189] of this series, India developed, even in remote antiquity, a highly efficient and useful system of local government which survived the repeated shocks of political convulsions till the early years of the 19th century. Sir Charles Metcalfe gave an eloquent testimony to its vitality in the following words: "The Village Communities are little republics, having nearly everything they want within themselves. They seem to last where nothing else lasts. Dynasty after dynasty tumbles down; revolution succeeds to revolution; Hindu, Pathan, Moghal, Mahratta, Sikh, English, are masters in turn, but the Village Communities remain the same"[190]

Perhaps under the stress of changing circumstances the British masters did not revitalize these indigenous institutions of the country, but built up gradually a new system of their own. For some time they worked through the surviving institutions or improvised others according to needs. In Bengal, Regulations were passed in 1816 and 1819, which authorized the Government to levy money for the construction and repair of roads, bridges and drains, and for maintenance of ferries The Government worked in such matters with the assistance of local consultative committees, with the Magistrate as secretary, in the respective districts. Voluntary funds for local improvements were raised in Madras and Bombay. Between 1865 and 1869 legislation was passed in Madras and Bombay legalizing levy of cesses on land for such purposes. An Act of 1869 authorized the Bombay Government to make provision for expenditure on matters of local public utility and to form committees for administration of such funds, not only in the district as a whole but also in the sub-divisions.

Lord Mayo's decentralization scheme of 1870[191] was a significant step in the direction of local self-government. In the next year Acts were passed in the different Provinces providing for the levy of rates and the constitution of local committees to administer the funds. These committees, with an official chairman for each, were constituted by official and non-official nominees of the Government and were under Government control. These acted mostly as Government agencies.

The liberal administration of Lord Ripon is memorable for its famous Resolution of 1882 on Local Self-Government. Lord Ripon's Government expressed, as follows, their object in extending the principles of self-government:

> "It is not, primarily, with a view to improvement in administration, that this measure is put forward and supported. It is chiefly desirable as an instrument of political and popular education. His Excellency in Council has himself no doubt that in course of time, as local knowledge and local interest are brought to bear more freely upon local administration, improved efficiency will in fact follow. But at starting, there will doubtless be many failures, calculated to discourage exaggerated hopes, and even in some cases to cast apparent discredit upon the practice of self-government itself. If, however, the officers of Government only set themselves, as the Governor-General in Council believes they will, to foster sedulously the small beginnings of the independent political life; if they accept loyally and as their own the policy of the Government, and if they come to realise that the system really opens to them a fairer field for the exercise of administrative tact and directive energy than the more autocratic system which it supersedes then it may be hoped that the period of failures will be short and substantial progress will very soon become manifest".[illegible]

Making allowance for 'local peculiarities," the Resolution first laid down certain fundamental principles to be universally followed for general advance. A network of Local Boards was to be maintained and extended throughout the country. These were to be "charged with definite duties and entrusted with definite funds". To "ensure among the members both local interest and local knowledge", it was considered very important that "the area of jurisdiction allotted to each Board should in no case be too large". The smallest administrative unit—"the sub-division, the *taluk* or the *tahsil*"—was ordinarily to "form the maximum area to be placed under a Local Board", though there might be smaller units of primary boards with jurisdiction over small areas. It was laid down in the Resolution that the Local Boards, "both urban and rural, must everywhere have a large preponderance of non-official members. In no case ought the official members to be more than one-third of the whole". The non-official members were to hold office for at least two years after election or appointment. Members of the Local Boards were to be "chosen by election wherever it may, in the opinion of the Local Governments, be practicable to adopt that system of choice". The Governor-General in Council did not "require the adoption of the system of election in all cases" and wished to establish it "as widely as local circumstances will permit". "The single vote, the cumulative vote, election by wards, election by the whole town or tract, suffrage of more or less extended qualification, election by castes or occupation—these and other methods might all be tried". Non-official persons were to act, "wherever practicable", as Chairman of the Local Boards.

Provision was, however, made for the control of the Provincial Government over the Local Bodies. In the first place, sanction of the executive authorities was required for the validity of certain acts "such as the raising of loans, the imposition of taxes in other than duly authorized forms, the alienation of Municipal property, interference with any matters involving religious questions or affecting the public peace, and the like". In the second place, the Provincial Government was to have "power either to set aside altogether the proceedings of the Board in particular cases, or, in the event of gross and continued neglect of any important duty, to suspend the Board temporarily, by the appointment of persons to execute the office of the Board until the neglected duty had been satisfactorily performed". Further, the appointment of Chairman was to be subject to the approval of the Government.

In pursuance of the policy underlying the above mentioned Resolution, Local Self-Government Acts were passed in the different Provinces in 1883-1884 But the high hope raised by Ripon's liberalism was blasted owing to the unsympathetic and illiberal attitude of the bureaucracy. The Indian National Congress continued to press, from its early days, for a truly liberal and democratic local self-government.

2. *Towns*

Lord Ripon's Government took an important step also in regard to municipal administration of towns. Previously local administration of the towns varied in principle and procedure. The first attempt to introduce municipal government, outside Presidency towns, was made by an Act passed in 1842. This Act, applicable only to Bengal, was to enable "the inhabitants of any place of public resort or residence to make better provision for purposes connected with public health and convenience". But being based upon the voluntary principle, this Act "could take effect in no place except on the application of two-thirds of the householders, and as the taxation enforceable under it was of a direct character, the law nowhere met with popular acceptance". The Act of 1842 was repeated in 1850, and Act XXVI of this year for municipal administration of country towns was applicable to the whole of British India. This Act was permissive in nature. By it the "Government of any Province was empowered to bring it into operation in any town only when satisfied that the application to that effect is in accordance with the wishes of the inhabitants.... The Government was then authorized to appoint the Magistrate and such number of inhabitants as may appear necessary to be Commissioners, on whom large powers (were) conferred for making rules and provision was made

for taxation by indirect methods. It is under this power that the levy of octroi-duties, now so common, first became legal in India". This Act was practically inoperative in Madras and Bengal, though it was considerably used in Bombay and the North-Western Provinces.[193]

Gradually there was growing consciousness about the need for further municipal legislation, and Acts were passed for Madras in 1865, for Bengal in 1864 and 1868, for the Panjāb in 1867, and for the Central Provinces, Awadh and the North-Western Provinces in 1868. These Acts provided for election in constituting municipalities and also the levy of local taxes. But nowhere was election introduced, except to some extent in the Panjāb and the Central Provinces.

The Resolution of 1870 on Provincial Finance envisaged extension of local supervision and control of the funds meant for education, sanitation, medical help and local public works, and therewith increased opportunities for the development of self-government.[194] In order to achieve this object new Municipal Acts were passed in the different Provinces, namely for Madras in 1871, and for Bombay, Bengal, the North-Western Provinces, the Panjāb and the Central Provinces in 1873. These Acts, besides widening the sphere of municipal administration, provided for extension of the elective principle. But this principle was not introduced successfully anywhere, except in the Central Provinces.[195] In Bengal the system of election was adopted only in three, and in Madras in four towns only. In North-Westren Provinces election was tried in a large number of towns, but the result was not very encouraging. On the whole, nothing like a responsible municipal government had as yet come into being. In most cases the members of the Municipal Committees were dependent, for all practical purposes, on the District Magistrate, and the Municipalities were virtually under Government control. Municipal Government. as Lord Hobart, Governor of Madras ,observed in 1874, was "an oligarchy dependent upon a superior power which may control its action to almost any conceivable extent".[196]

Matters stood thus when Lord Ripon's Government introduced its famous Resolution on Local Self-Government in May, 1882.[197] Referring to the results of the policy, enunciated in 1870, this Resolution said: "Considerable progress. . .had been made since 1870. A large income from local rates and cesses had been secured, and in some Provinces the management of this income had been freely entrusted to local bodies. Municipalities had also increased in number and usefulness. But there was still a greater inequality of progress in different parts of the country than varying local circumstances

seemed to warrant. In many places services admirably adapted for local management were reserved in the hands of the central administration, while everywhere heavy charges were levied on Municipalities in connection with the Police, over which they had necessarily no executive control".

Lord Ripon's Resolution of May, 1882, provided for the introduction of principles of self-government in the municipalities. According to it, the actual municipal administration was to be transferred to the elected representatives of the people working under a non-official Chairman, though the ultimate supervision, control and superintendence remained with the Government. It was further proposed that the charges for the maintenance of the town police, hitherto paid out of municipal revenues, should be met by Government, and Municipalities should spend equivalent sums on education, medical relief and local works of public utility. Acts were passed in 1883-84, which modified the constitution, powers and functions of the muncipal bodies and provided for the compulsory election of a large proportion of municipal Commissioners varying from one-half to three-quarters. Provision was also made for the election of a Chairman in place of the Executive officer, who had hitherto held the post. But, for several years the District Officer continued to be elected the Chairman at many places. Gradually, however, most of the Municipalities came to elect a non-official as Chairman.[19'a]

3. *Presidency Towns*

In the Presidency towns, which were the earliest seats of British authority in India, municipal administration evolved on a pattern different from that of the District towns From comparatively early times, the Presidency towns had some sort of municipal administration, first under Royal Charters and later under Statutes. A Statute of George III authorized the Governor-General to appoint Justices of the Peace in these towns. Besides their judicial duties, the Justices of the Peace were given the powers to provide for police and sanitation in these towns by appointing scavengers and watchmen, and to levy rates for these purposes on owners and occupiers of houses and lands.

But this arrangement did not work satisfactorily. "The Justices as a body did not take much interest in their work, and their power was gradually concentrated in the hands of the Chief Magistrate, who was helped in Calcutta by the Superintendent of Police to collect the taxes and to supervise the work of conservancy".[198]

Acts were passed in 1856 to improve the state of municipal administration in the Presidency towns, and three Commissioners were

appointed for each of them. One of these Acts provided for the conservancy and improvement of the towns of Calcutta, Madras and Bombay, and another for more regular assessment and collection of rates. The Act meant for Calcutta contained special provisions for gas-lighting and for the construction of sewers.

But there were many defects in the new system. "Responsibility was divided among the three commissioners: residents were not associated in any way with the administration; there was no power to raise the necessary funds, while proper audit control was completely lacking".[199] Henceforth, efforts were made in each Province on different lines for the improvement of municipal administration in the Presidency towns. In Calcutta the Act of 1863 vested the municipal government of the town in a corporation, consisting of the Justices of the Peace for the Town, with executive authority concentrated in the hands of a salaried Chairman appointed by the Government. The position of the Chairman was strengthened by his being appointed Commissioner of Police. Armed with such authority and provided with funds by the raising of house-rates and water-rates, Sir Stewart Hogg took steps for drainage and water supply. Only 25 out of about 129 Justices of the Peace, qualified to sit in the Corporation, took active part in municipal affairs. So, soon an amending Act provided that "the resident Justices for Bengal, Bihar and Orissa should no longer be ex-officio members of the Municipal Corporation, but that only such of them as might be from time to time specially nominated by the Lieutenant-Governor should be members".

But the remodelled municipal government did not work properly. There was lack of harmony and co-ordination between the Justices of the Peace and the executive. The constitution of the Corporation of Calcutta was modified by a Consolidating Act of 1876. By it direct election by rate-payers was introduced and the number of Commissioners on the Corporation was fixed at 72, two-thirds of whom were to be elected and one-third appointed by Government. Some improvements followed it in respect of drainage, water supply, sewerage and conservancy. In 1882 the number of Commissioners, elected by the rate-payers, was raised to fifty and the area of the municipality was extended by the inclusion of some suburban areas.

The growth of self-government in the city of Calcutta was checked in Lord Curzon's régime. By the Act of 1899 the number of Commissioners, elected by rate-payers, was reduced to one-half of the total strength, and the rest were to be appointed, fifteen by the Local Government, four each by the Bengal Chamber of Commerce and the Calcutta Trades Association, and two by the Port

Commissioners. The Chairman, appointed by the Government, was vested with enormous independent powers. The powers of the Corporation were confined to fixing rates of assessment and laying down some general policy. Between the Chairman and the Corporation was a General Committee of twelve, of whom four were selected by the ward Commissioners, four by the other Commissioners, and four were appointed by the Local Government. The plea for introducing this measure to curtail the powers of the people's representatives was that there was very little work and too much of talk in the Corporation, and effective action would be possible only through a strong executive, free from the control of the Corporation or its Committees.

This retrogade and undemocratic step naturally evoked strong popular protest. Describing it as an "unfortunate measure", Mr R. C. Dutt remarked in his Presidential Address at the Indian National Congress (1899): "I have seen year after year the improvements effected, the sanitary reforms done, the wasteful expenditure cut down, and every department of the office brought to order by the elected Commissioners within the last twenty-five years, some of the best men whom our country produced, and who have given years of their life to their patriotic work. Their work has been consistently rcognised in past years by successive rulers of the land, but it is necessary to give a dog a bad name in order to hang it, and it was reserved for Sir Alexander Mackenzie, who was a friend of self-government under the administration of Mr. Gladstone and Lord Ripon, to end his career in India by giving the Self-Government system in Calcutta a bad name, and then effectually strangling it". Surendra Nath Banerji vehemently denounced it in the Bengal Legislative Council. While opposing the bill for the last time on the last day of the debate, 27th September, he observed that the date "will be remembered by future generations of Bengalees as that which marks the extinction of local self-government in Calcutta". Protesting against this Act, twenty-eight members of the Calcutta Corporation, including Surendra Nath, tendered their resignation.

In Bombay, the Municipal Act of 1865 constituted a corporate body of 500 Justices of the Peace for town administration. Executive powers were, however, vested in the hands of the Chairman, who was a highly paid Government official. An independent Controller of Accounts was appointed and his signature was required for every item of expenditure. But this arrangement did not work satisfactorily. The Controller of Accounts could hardly exercise any independent authority and remained subordinate to the Chair-

man. Further, a body of five hundred proved to be too unwieldy for guidance or check.

Changes were introduced by the Bombay Municipal Act of 1872. The numerical strength of the Corporation was reduced to sixty-four members, of whom thirty-two were to be elected by the rate-payers, sixteen elected by the resident Justices of the Peace, and sixteen nominated by the Government. The Chairman continued to exercise, as before, full executive authority. The post of the Controller of Accounts was abolished, but a Town Council, as a Standing Committee of the Corporation, was to audit the accounts weekly, and there was to be a monthly audit by paid auditors. This system worked with good results and continued till the end of the nineteenth century with slight modifications.

The system of municipal administration by three Commissioners continued at Madras till 1867. By legislation passed in that year in order to associate the people with municipal administration, the town was divided into eight wards, with four councillors appointed in each by Government. Executive power remained solely with the President. Some new sources of income were provided, but still there was no adequate fund for improved municipal work.

Act V of the Madras Council for the year 1878 provided for the election of sixteen out of the thirty-two members of the Corporation by the rate-payers, but the President and the two Vice-presidents were salaried Government officials. The elective system was further extended by Act I of 1884, when twenty-four out of the thirty-two members were elected by the rate-payers. But the difficulties due to lack of funds still continud.

In 1904 a new Municipal Act was passed on the lines of the Calcutta Municipal Act of 1899. This reduced the number of Commissioners elected by the rate-payers to twenty, out of thirty-six, and gave special representation to the commercial interests in the town.

Thus through various measures, municipal administration in the Presidency towns had developed a few important features, namely, a limited electorate, a strong executive in the hands of a Government official, certain safeguards for control over finance and auditing of accounts, and statutory provision for such works as sanitation, water supply, etc. The Government had the right to interfere in cases of mismanagement or negligence. There was no real self-government in the Municipalities and Government control was maintained over them in many respects There was, however, a growing consciousness in the country for making municipalities self-governing and efficient.

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Mr. R C Dutt significantly observed in 1899: "The aptitude for self-government in towns and villages is, in India, a heritage of 3000 years, and to seek to ignore it is an administrative blunder and a confession of our own incompetency".

XI. MILITARY ADMINISTRATION.

Reference has been made above[200] to the organization of the army up to the outbreak of the Mutiny in 1857. After the suppression of the Mutiny and the direct assumption of the Government of India by the British Crown, the re-organization of the army in India naturally became a question of first-rate importance The lessons of the Mutiny were not lost upon the British, and three fundamental principles formed the basis of the new policy, namely, (1) increment of British troops and reduction of the Indian element; (2) general mixtures of all castes and classes in the native regiments in order to destroy the unity and therewith the predominance of any particular element (this policy of division and counterpoise was known as the balancing of communities in the Army); (3) removal of the sepoy element as far as possible from the artillery.

These ideas dominated the military policy for the fifty years that followed the great Mutiny of 1857. The first important question to be decided was the form of the European army to be maintained for Indian Service. The Governor-General, Lord Canning, and some others were in favour of local European army formed for permanent service in India. But it was finally decided that the European element should be composed of the British army, regiments and batteries being posted in India.

The East India Company's European troops, then numbering above 15,000, were transferred to the service of the Crown and they were made "liable to service wherever ordered". The local European troops protested against this arrangement, which was called at that time the White Mutiny "Much discontent, a good deal of open insubordinaion, and even more covert disaffection, were manifested, and 10,000 men took their discharge".[201] The European infantry regiments, including those raised during the troubles of 1857-59, became regiments of the line and numbered from 101 to 109 The Bengal, Madras and Bombay artillery, and the corresponding corps of Indian Engineers were amalgamated with the Royal Artillery and the Royal Engineers.[202] The Act of 1860 put an end to the existence of European troops as a separate force for local service in India. The naval force of the East India Company came to an end in 1863, and the defence of India was undertaken by the Royal Navy.

A Royal Commission, appointed to advise on matters relating to army reorganization, recommended that the British force should be 80,000 strong, and that the proportion of native troops to it should not be more than two to one in the Bengal army and three to one in Madras and Bombay. Another recommendation of the Commission was that "native regiments should be formed by a general mixture of all classes and castes".[263]

The native armies stood as follows after reconstitution, announced in 1861.[264]

	Cavalry regiments	Artillery Batteries	Infantry battalions
Bengal army	19	.	49
Madras army	4	..	40
Bombay army	7	2	30
Punjab Frontier Force .	6	5	12
Local Corps	2		5
Hyderabad contingent .	4	4	6

There were also four regiments of Gurkhas, as a part of Bengal army, and a fifth as unit of the Punjab Frontier Force.

Though there was reduction in total strength of the native armies, the number of British element increased. Thus in 1864, in the aggregate strength of 205,000 men in these armies, 65,000 were British.

To make the appointments in the native armies, held by British officers, more attractive, they were to be regarded as holding staff appointments, carrying alowances in addition to pay of rank. In the military establishments in each of the three Presidencies, the officers were graded in a Staff Corps, recruited from the Queen's and the Company's service. There remained also, in each Presidency, two other small bodies of officers, one consisting of officers of the armies as existed before 1857, and the other of officers who had received commission since then. The Company's military college at Addiscombe was closed and all new appointments to the Staff Corps were to be made only from the British army. Promotions in the Staff Corps were fixed by length of service. Officers, after twelve years' service (subsequently reduced to eleven and later to nine), were to become Captains, after twenty years' service (reduced afterwards to eighteen), Majors, after twenty-six, Lieutenant-Colonels, and after thirty-one, Colonels.

For many years following the reorganization, reviewed above, there was no change in the establishment of the three armies, but various changes took place in dress, equipment and armament. Soon, however, the menace of Russian advance and the troubles of Afghanistan brought the question of army reforms to the forefront

during the administration of Lord Lytton. "The Afghan War of 1878-80, involving the employment of a considerable army and a strain upon the military resources, was fruitful of lessons in every branch of the art of war and of army organisation".[205] For advice about further reorganization of the army in view of the growing military needs, Lord Lytton assembled the Army Organisation Commission of 1879. After an extensive inquiry, this Commission recommended some important reforms, many of which were eventually carried out. "The only immediate outcome was the reduction (in 1881) of four regiments of native cavalry and eighteen of native infantry, and an addition of one British officer to each of the remaining corps. The strength of each regiment was at the same time generally increased from 499 to 550 of all ranks in the cavalry, and from 712 to 832 in the infantry".[206] The Panjdeh incident, the growing apprehension of war with Russia, and the Third Burmese War caused immense anxieties to the Government of India and led to the augmentation of British and native troops in India, bringing the strength of the former to 73,500 and of the latter to 154,000.

The pressure of dangers from outside also made the British Government more careful and vigilant about the organization and efficiency of their armies in India; so their composition was considerably changed. Since 1873 the more martial races like the Sikhs, the Pathans and the Gurkhas replaced to a large extent old Hindustanis and Southerners. After the Third Burmese War, eight Madras regiments, considered not to be quite efficient, were converted into Burma regiments, composed of the more warlike races of North-West India, and were quartered permanently in Burma. Recruitment of the Telingas was stopped in 1895. Between 1902 and 1904 "two of the Madras regiments were converted into battalions of Moplahs, one into a Gurkha corps, and nine into battalions of Panjabis; and the cavalry regiments, which in 1891 had been converted from four three-squadron into three four-squadron regiments, were stiffened by a large infusion of personnel from the Panjab".[207]

Certain changes were introduced to improve army organization. In 1891 the Staff Corps of the three Presidency armies were amalgamated into one "Indian Staff Corps". In 1903 this was renamed the Indian Army. By the Madras and Bombay Armies Act of the year 1893, the offices of Commander-in-Chief in Madras and Bombay were abolished, and the control of the Local Governments over the two armies was withdrawn. This measure was put into effect in April, 1895. This year the three old Presidency armies were organized into four Army Commands, named after Bengal, Madras,

Bombay and the Panjāb, each under a Lieutenant-General. But in 1907 the four Army Commands were transformed into Army Corps Commands, each Corps having two or more divisions.

Besides the regular forces of the Crown, the Imperial Service Troops were utilized by the Government for military purposes. During the Second Afghan War contingents of troops supplied to Government by some Panjāb States rendered valuable service on the frontier, and when in 1885 war with Russia seemed imminent, the Princes of India placed their resources at the disposal of the Government. Out of this offer was constituted in 1889 what came to be called the Imperial Service Troops In peace time they remained under the control of the States furnishing them and were commanded by Indian officers. But they were under the supervision of the British inspecting officers who were responsible to the Foreign Department of the Government of India. The cost of the Imperial Service Troops was borne by the Indian States, but the charges for the British inspecting staff were met from the revenues of British India Lord Curzon also organized the Imperial Cadet Corps consisting of about twenty young men of high lineage who were trained in the Chiefs' College.

During the administration of Lord Curzon an intricate constitutional issue arose regarding army administration in India. Since 1861 the Government of India exercised supreme control over the army in India through the Military Member of the Governor-General's Council. The Military Member was an officer of the British or Indian Army, presided over the Military Department, and "was the constitutional adviser of the Viceroy on questions relating to the Army". But the Secretary of State for India appointed the Commander-in-Chief to be an extraordinary member of the Governor-General's Council. As head of the army, the Commander-in-Chief was responsible for movements of troops and for their promotion and discipline. This created an anomalous situation, leading often to misunderstanding between the Military Secretariat and the Army Headquarters. Further, when the Commander-in-Chief had to make any proposal, he was required to do so through the Military Member, an officer of lower rank than his.

This system was attacked by Lord Kitchener, who arrived in India as Commander-in-Chief in November, 1902. He proposed the creation of an Army Department under the Commander-in-Chief, with complete authority over the entire business of military administration. But Lord Curzon, supported by the ordinary members of his Council, refused to accept it on the ground that the "tendency of the scheme was to concentrate military authority in the hands of

the Commander-in-Chief and to subvert the supremacy of the civil power by depriving it of independent military advice".[206] In a despatch, dated 23 March, 1905, the Government of India expressed their emphatic conviction that the Military Member was an essential element in the Government of India. The following passage in this despatch sums up their argument. "His Majesty's Government may be invited to consider the position that would be produced in England if a Commander-in-Chief of the British Army possessed a seat in the Cabinet, if he were the sole representative of the Army there, if he enjoyed the power and rank of the Secretary of State for War in addition, and if His Majesty's Ministers were called upon to accept or reject his proposals with no independent or qualified opinion to assist them. And yet this is precisely the situation which we are asked to accept by Lord Kitchener in India."

Mr Brodrick, the Secretary of State, appointed a Committee to consider the question, from which a sub-committee was afterwards appointed. The sub-committee did not adopt Kitchener's proposals in their entirety It recommended the transformation of the Military Department into a Department of Military Supply and the limitation of the Military Member to the control of Army contracts, the purchase of stores, ordnance, remounts, military works, clothing and the medical and marine services The Military Member should be the adviser of the Governor-General in Council "on questions of general policy, as distinct from purely military questions". The last statement was somewhat vague, but for that very reason left the door open for a compromise. When, therefore, the sub-committee's recommendations were practically accepted by the Committee and endorsed in the despatch of the Secretary of State, dated May 31, and Lord Curzon thereupon resigned on 27 June, certain modifications were proposed by the Government of India on 6 July, 1905, and they were accepted by the Secretary of State and Kitchener. The principal feature of the compromise was that the new Supply Member "should be available for official consultation by the Viceroy on all military questions without distinction, and not only upon questions of general policy, or when cases are marked for Council". But the Secretary of State and the Government of India interpreted this passage differently, and their views about the essential function of the Supply Member were consequently very different. This became apparent when Lord Curzon recommended the name of General Barrow for the post of Supply Member. The Secretary of State did not accept the advice but thought that the Supply Member should have some technical experience as he would be in charge of the manufacturing departments. As Lord Curzon pointed

out, the Secretary of State desired to choose a man for technical experience of military stores and supplies whereas he (Curzon) was thinking of a man who should also be qualified to give advice to the Government of India on general military questions. "Position is therefore," said Curzon in his telegram of August 5, "in principle, almost exactly where it was when I resigned in June, and the main conditions which caused me to resign on that occasion have again been called into being". Lord Curzon was naturally piqued when the Secretary of State asked him to recommend other names for the Supply Member after consulting Lord Kitchener. The views of the Secretary of State endorsed by the Cabinet, and the detailed scheme prepared by Kitchener, left no doubt in the minds of Curzon that his "second Military adviser was meant to be a lay figure and that the Supply Department was to be far more an empty shell than he had expected". So Lord Curzon tendered his resignation on 12 August, 1905, and left India in the month of November of that year.[208a] Since 1907 the Commander-in-Chief became the sole authority, under the Government of India, responsible for military administration in India.

The maintenance of huge army establishments in India, to serve the interests of the British empire, entailed an enormous strain on the financial resources of this country The cost of the British troops in India had been always met out of the Indian revenues. By an Act of the reign of George III, the Company had "to pay to the king, in the East Indies, two lakhs of current rupees per annum for each and every regiment consisting of 1,000 men". In 1788 this was changed to a charge for "raising, transporting, and maintaining such forces". Between 1834 and 1857 the average payment was about £195,000 a year In view of the large increase of expenses, a capitation rate of £10 was fixed in 1860-61. But this plan was given up for one based on actual expenses. After some years' discussion, a capitation rate of £7½ was introduced in 1890-91. "This 'capitation rate' is based on the charges for enlisting and training the recruit, the pay of young officers before they go to India, a share of the cost of educational establishments, and the expenses of men sent home time-expired or invalided. It does not include 'deferred pay' or gratuities, and transport and non-effective charges are paid separately".[209]

From 1876 there was a tremendous increase in army expenditure in India, and in 1904-5 the expenditure represented 46 per cent. of the net revenue of the Government of India. To add to this, there was also expenditure for special defence works and military operations. In May 1895, a Royal Commission was appointed, with

Lord Welby as its President, "to enquire into the administration and management of the Military and Civil expenditure incurred in India" and "the apportionment of charge between the Governments of the United Kingdom and of India for purposes in which both are interested." The Commission reported finally in 1900 and recommended continuance of the Capitation Charge of £7. 10s. on every British soldier sent out to India. They held that half the military charge for Aden, and half the cost of the transport of troops to and from India should be paid by the Imperial Government. Regarding the point that the Army in India was kept and used largely for imperial purposes of Great Britain, they wrote: "When the time of revising the present arrangement arrives, the exceptional position of India as to military charges should be borne in mind. If, on the one hand, she imposes a certain strain on the Imperial resources in the supply of services which she properly pays, on the other, she renders services to the Imperial Government which should not be disregarded." On the question of the payment of Indian troops sent out for military action, the Commission expressed the view that "ordinarily all charges in respect to troops lent must be borne by the country which had a special interest in the expedition, but that if the country supplying the troops had also a direct and substantial interest, it should bear a portion of the burden". It was pointed out that India had no "direct and substantial interest" in the employment of troops in Europe, in Africa west of the Cape of Good Hope, or in Eastern Asia, but that "she had a direct and substantial interest in keeping open the Suez Canal and in matters affecting Siam, Persia, the Arabian coast, Afghanistan and Central Asia". In spite of these recommendations. the problem of heavy military expenditure remained unsolved.

XII. COMMUNICATION, TRANSPORT, AND IRRIGATION.

1. *Railways.*

Reference has been made above[210] to the formation of British Companies to open Railway lines in India under the Guarantee System. By 1859 eight Companies[211] were formed for the construction of nearly 50,000 miles of line. But the Guarantee System produced various evils affecting the interests of the Government and the people of this country. It caused wastage and extravagance and entailed a heavy drain on the country's resources. By 1869 the deficit on railway budget amounted to Rs. 1,66,50,000. The Companies with State guarantee of 5 per cent. or 4½ per cent. profits on the outlay did not have incentive for economy or convenience of the travellers.

The defects of this system were pointed out by several persons of high rank and authority as witnesses before the Parliamentary Com-

mittees of 1871, 1872, 1873 and 1874. One of them, William Thornton, strongly referred to hastiness and carelessness in drawing up the contracts "I think", he observed, "that the contracts are perfect disgrace to whoever drew them up, for they contradict themselves two or three times in the course of their several clauses, and they are seldom appealed to for the protection of Government interests without turning out to be practically worthless for that purpose". "This is the necessary result", he added, "of the way in which they are drawn up, that a railway having been commenced on the understanding that a certain guarantee would be given by the Government whatever the railway might cost, the Government is practically bound to continue the guarantee of interest upon the expenditure. Therefore, of course, the undertakers of the railway, the Company, are deprived of one of the great inducements to economy; they know that whatever blunders they make these blunders will not prevent their getting full current interest on their expenditure". Sir John Lawrence, as Viceroy of India, strongly condemned the extravagance of the Indian Railways in a Minute, dated the 9th January, 1869, and as a witness before the Parliamentary Committee of 1873 he observed: "I think it is notorious in India among almost every class that has ever had talk on the subject, that the railways have been extravagantly made; that they have cost a great deal more than they are worth, or ought to have cost".

In March, 1869, the Government of India had addressed the Secretary of State for India, drawing his attention to the serious liabilities of the State under the system of 'Guaranteed' railways. In July of the same year, the Secretary of State replied to the Government of India accepting their views. The time had come, he held, when "both in raising and in expending such additional capital as may be required for new lines in India, the Government should secure for itself the full benefit of the credit which it lends, and of the cheaper agencies which ought to be at its command".[212]

So the Guaranteed System was abandoned and the plan of State Railways constructed by the State through its own agency was introduced. The lines directly constructed by the State agency between 1869 and 1880 were the Indus Valley, Punjab Northern, Rajputana, Malwa, and North Bengal. The total length of State Railway lines, opened by the 31st December, 1880, was 2932 miles.

But the outbreak of dreadful famines in India between 1874 and 1879, the strain of the Second Afghan War and fall in the gold value of silver caused financial difficulties, which "dealt the *coup-de-grace* to the policy of pure State construction and management. In England, also, a feeing of hostility towards State enterprise was again

surging up".[213] Replying to a letter from Lord Lytton's Government, the Secretary of State, Lord Hartington, wrote: "In the case of railways, I do not doubt that Your Excellency will bear constantly in mind the importance, whenever possible, of ensuring their construction by private capital either local or European" Moreover, the Famine Commission Report of 1880 urged the construction of additional 5000 miles of railways for combating the evils of the famines.

In view of the new factors noted above, the Government took recourse to a new "guarantee system" with certain changes in the old terms. The modifications were as follows: (1) The lines constructed by the Companies were to be considered as the property of the Secretary of State for India, who was given the right to terminate the contracts approximately twenty-five years after their respective dates, or at subsequent intervals of ten years, on repayment of the capital supplied by the Companies; (2) the rate of interest for the capital provided by the Companies was lowered, the usual rate being 3½ per cent.; (3) the Government could keep for themselves a larger share of surplus profits, usually three-fifths.

Through 'unaided private enterprise' four Companies were started: the Nilgiri, the Delhi-Ambala-Kalka, the Bengal Central, and the Bengal-North-Western. But this enterprise did not prove successful. The Indian States were also invited to construct railways in their respective territories independent of Government aid, and a beginning in this respect was made with the Nizam's State Railway covering a length of 330 miles.

Because of the fall in exchange within a few years, the Government considered it necessary to reduce their gold liabilities. So in 1893 one more attempt was made to manage railways through Companies. But as guarantee might affect sterling liabilities, a policy of granting subsidy, in the shape of rebates, to encourage construction of feeder or branch lines, was adopted.

The rebate system did not, however, prove quite attractive; so in 1896 "the branch line company was offered an absolute guarantee of three per cent. with a share of surplus profits, or a rebate to the full extent of the main line's earnings in supplement of their own, the total being limited to 3½ per cent. on the capital levy".[214] But the 1896 terms also proved to be as unsatisfactory as those of 1893. These were criticized in 1903 by Mr. Thomas Robertson, Special Commissioner for Indian Railways, and in 1907-8 by the Mackay Committee on Indian Railway Finance and Administration. In view of these the Government introduced some modifications in 1913, according to which capital for the branch line might be raised partly under the 'guarantee system' and partly under the 'rebate system',

and there was an increase "in the rate of guarantee from 3 to 3½ per cent., and of rebate from 3½ to 5 per cent., with equal division of surplus profits between the Government and the Company"

As regards Railway administration it may be noted that in 1854, during the Governor-Generalship of Lord Dalhousie, a special department of Public Works was formed in the Government of India with subordinate departments for Madras and Bombay. The first incumbent of the post of Secretary to the Government of India for the Department of Public Works was Lieutenant-Colonel W. E. Baker of the Bengal Engineers. In 1879, a single Director of Railways was appointed with powers over both the State lines and lines of the Companies, but he remained included in the secretariat organization as Deputy Secretary for Railways. The growth of railways soon necessitated a change. Mr. Thomas Robertson recommended in his report the replacement of the existing system by a Railway Board.

In 1905 the Railway branch of the Secretariat was abolished and a Railway Board was constituted, consisting of a Chairman and two members. The Railway Board was placed directly under the new Department of Commerce and Industry. Administrative functions were in general delegated to this Board, while the Government of India reserved to itself "the final decision in regard to the preparation of the railway programme and the larger question of railway policy and finance".

By the end of the nineteenth century a considerable part of the present railway lines had been constructed. But these entailed enormous drain on the resources of India, and the Government had to incur an annual loss on this account. It was in 1899-1900 that a net profit accrued.

2. *Roads.*

With the growth of railways it became more necessary to construct feeder roads at right angles to them. But the trunk roads, running parallel to the railways, were neglected.[215] The extension of local self-government during the régimes of Lord Mayo and Lord Ripon, by investing the local authorities with the responsibility for maintenance of roads, afforded stimulus to the development of roads. By the beginning of the present century roads were classed as (i) metalled; (ii) unmetalled; (iii) banked and surfaced, but not drained; (iv) banked but not surfaced; partially bridged and drained; (v) cleared and partially bridged and drained; and (vi) cleared only.[216]

3. *Water Transport.*

India had a large volume of river traffic and inland navigation in the past. As a matter of fact, most of the great cities flourished on

the banks of the rivers. The Ganga, the Bhagirathi, the Brahmaputra and the Sindhu were "navigable by steamers all the year round, or for the greater part of the year, for hundreds of miles above their mouths, or above the heads of the navigable canals traversing their deltas".[217] In Peninsular India, the large rivers like the Narmada and the Tapti were not of use for navigation except at their mouths. On the east coast the rivers like the Mahanadi, the Godavari and the Krishna were navigable for some distance above the heads of their deltas, but the traffic was not very considerable. Besides these limited facilities for inland navigation, there were, round the coast, large number of small rivers, creeks and *nullahs* affording facilities for water transport which were "fully utilised by small native craft". But beyond these zones inland navigation was practically confined to the deltas and to the valleys of the great rivers which formed the natural waterways of the country.[218]

In studying inland navigation, we have to take note also of canals of two categories—(a) canals which were constructed solely for purposes of navigation; and (b) irrigation canals, also used for navigation. In the former the most important in Madras is the Buckingham Canal which, being connected with one of the branches of the Krishna system, and then running almost due south, skirts the Coromandel coast for a distance of 262 miles and passes through Madras city. In Bengal, two such important works are Calcutta and Eastern canals, and the Nadia rivers. These comprise a length of 735 miles of navigable canals and river channels, and the former provides "a continuous interior line of communication between Calcutta and the Sundarbans, Eastern Bengal, and Assam, for the benefit of steamers, flats, and small crafts constructed for inland waters".[219] The Nadia rivers comprise the Bhagirathi, the Jalangi, and the Mathabhanga on which steamers could navigate from July to October.

As regards the irrigation works, utilized also for purposes of navigation, mention may be made of the Godavari and Krishna Canals in the Madras Presidency. The conditions for navigation in another irrigation work in Madras, the Kurnool-Cuddapah Canal, were not satisfactory. In Bengal, Orissa and Bihar, the irrigation works adapted for navigation were the Orissa canals, the Midnapore canals, the Hijli canals, and the three main canals of the Son system. In the United Provinces the main lines of the Lower Ganges Canal and of the Agra Canal are navigable throughout. In the Panjāb the only navigable canals were portions of the Western Jamuna and Sirhind systems.

Inland navigation was neglected with the commencement of the construction of railways. The Industrial Commission observed in

1918: "In the absence of a representative specially charged with their interests (that is, those of the existing waterways), the vested interests of the railways have prevented waterways in India from receiving the attention that has been given to them in other countries with such satisfactory results". As a matter of fact, the Government of India pursued a definite policy of preferring railways to irrigation works. While the total expenditure on railways came to 125 millions sterling down to March 1880, the total irrigation works cost only twelve millions sterling.

Realizing the importance of canals in India, both for irrigation and transit, Sir Arthur Cotton, the architect of the magnificent Kaveri and Godavari Works, prepared a scheme of navigable canals, which he placed before a Parliamentary Committee in 1872. "My great point", he remarked, "is this, that what India wants is water-carriage; that the railways have completely failed; they cannot carry at the price required; they cannot carry the quantities; and they cost the country three millions a year, and increasing, to support them. That steamboat canals would not have cost more than one-eighth that of the railways; would carry any quantities at nominal prices and at any speed; would require no support from the Treasury; and would be combined with irrigation".[220] The scheme of Cotton to construct a number of navigable canals all over India at a cost of thirty millions sterling was supported by John Bright. But Lord George Hamilton, Under-Secretary of State for India, opposed it in a vigorous speech, and "spoke of Sir Arthur Cotton in terms which the latter resented." In a reply which he sent to the Secretary of State, Sir Arthur wrote: "Whether it is quite becoming, or for the furtherance of the public service, for a young man who had never been in India, had never seen a tank, an irrigated area, or a mile of steamboat canal, or spoken to a Ryot in the irrigated districts, and was consequently, of necessity, very ignorant of the whole subject, to speak before the House and the world in such contemptuous terms of an officer old enough to be his grandfather. . . is a point which I beg respectfully to offer for the consideration of the Right Hon. the Secretary of State and his Council".[221]

In his evidence before the Committee of the House of Commons in 1878, Sir Arthur Cotton stoutly defended his scheme. First of all he instituted a comparison between railways and water-works in India in the following words: "The Railway account now stands thus:—

Cost of works	£112,000,000
Cost of land	£ 8,000,000
Debt now	£ 50,000,000
Total	£ 170,000,000

for which we have about 7500 miles, or at the rate of £23,000 per mile. At the present cost to the Treasury in interest on share capital 4½ millions, and on land and debt at 4 per cent., 3 millions; total, 7½ millions. From which, deducting nett receipts, 4½ millions, leaves *three millions a year as the loss on the money sunk.*

"The capital spent on the water-works, including the Toombhadra, is £16,000,000. The accumulation of interest against the Bari Doab, the Ganges, and other canals, are much more than balanced by those to credit on the Kaveri, Krishna, and Godavari works, which have at least 10 millions to their credit, leaving a balance in their favour of 5 millions. So that the money sunk may be taken at £11,000,000, the interest of which at 4 per cent. is half a million, against which we have a nett profit over working expenses of about a million, leaving a *nett gain to the Treasury of half a million a year on irrigation works.*"[222]

But, what was more important still, Sir Arthur Cotton showed that railways were no protection against famines "I am afraid", said he, "we must reckon that out of the 40 millions affected by the famine in Madras, Mysore, Hyderabad, and Bombay, 4 or 5 millions have perished, after spending 120 millions on railways besides incurring a debt of 50 millions sterling". And he pointed out forcibly that railways did not provide food for man and beast; did not carry the whole traffic of the country; did not carry it cheaply enough; did not pay interest on cost and debt; did not drain the country, and did not provide drinking water for the people. All this was and could be done by irrigation works.

"Why then were irrigation and navigable canals neglected? If these canals provided cheaper means of transit, why did the Indian Government not construct them?"

"I want to know what is in your mind," asked Sampson Lloyd, a banker of Brimingham and a member of the committee, "why any man should dread cheap transit?"

"Because," answered Sir Arthur Cotton, "it would stultify the railways, that is the sole point. Only think of a canal by the side of the Eastern Bengal Railway which carries some 200,000 tons, and a canal by the side of it carrying 2,000,000 tons, and swarming with passengers and goods. What a terrible affront to the railway that must be".[223]

Sri William Muir, formerly Lieutenant-Governor of North-Western Provinces and then Finance Minister of India, in supporting Cotton's scheme referred to another aspect of the question:

"I do not think I have expressed with sufficient emphasis the great value which I attach to the advantages derivable from the large canals such as the Ganges Canal and Jumna Canals. The extent of prosperity which has been conferred upon the districts through which they pass is very great in a general point of view; and the degree in which the people are preserved from the distress and privations of famine is beyond all calculation a benefit to the country. The advantage also which I spoke of before in saving land revenues, which would otherwise be in arrear and lost, is also great. And further, there is an advantage in the country being protected and being preserved from deterioration, which is incidental to land which is affected by famine, that is to say, being protected from the secondary effects of famine which are liable to continue for considerable periods after famine itself has passed away. Altogether the general improvement and advancement of the Doab, which is due specially to these canals, is a matter which, apart from their immediate financial returns, cannot be overlooked, and must be borne in mind in determining the general advantages derivable from canal irrigation".[225]

But it was the immediate financial return on which Lord George Hamilton's Committee laid the greatest emphasis. They pointed out that few of the irrigation works had proved remunerative and they 'emphatically rejected' the scheme. They attached no importance to the fact that the Ganga and Jamuna works had increased the prosperity of the people, prevented famines and saved the land revenues from loss in years of drought. They also completely ignored the fact that on the principle enunciated by them the Railway scheme was a far greater blunder as it entailed heavy loss, and its further extension should have been scrapped as soon as possible.

But the shallowness of the findings of the Lord George Hamilton's Committee was exposed by the Madras Finance Commission which commenced its work shortly afterwards. It "came to a conclusion diametrically opposite to that of Lord George Hamilton, both as regards the immediate returns, and the broad results of irrigation works." "The result has been", so the Famine Commission wrote in respect of irrigation works, "a great advantage to the State, regarded merely from the direct financial return on the money invested; and apart from their value in increasing the wealth of the country in ordinary years, and in preventing or mitigating famine in years of drought".[226]

Sir Arthur Cotton's scheme was rejected partly because of the ignorance of the English people who were unacquainted with the use of canals, but mainly due to the opposition of the vested interest of the Railways. The Railways benefited the English capitalists. Irrigation benefited only the Indians. The choice therefore presented no difficulty to English statesmen of those days.

XIII. GENERAL REVIEW.

The gradual evolution of an efficient system of administration is one of the most remarkable phases of the history of British rule in

India. History does not record a similar instance of a body of foreigners devoting so much energy and making such continuous and steady efforts to improve the machinery of government in a dependent or subject country. The details given in Chapters XII and XXVIII show in a conspicuous manner how, by methods of trial and failure, there emerged a framework of administration that has stood the test of time and may well be regarded as one of the richest legacies bequeathed by the British to India.

The task was indeed a formidable one. A body of foreign merchants had to take up the administration of an empire, of whose people, laws and manners they knew almost next to nothing. They could hardly find any guidance from the administrative system—or lack of it—which presented itself to them, as the result of a century of misrule, anarchy and confusion. The work was rendered more difficult by the radical differences in ideas, interests and outlook between the rulers and the ruled, and to a less degree, among the heterogeneous elements which composed the latter.

Almost every branch of administration had to be built up anew. The most commendable feature of the method followed by the British rulers is the constant endeavour towards progressive reforms, undaunted by failures. This is conspicuously illustrated by the various methods of land-settlement, tried in different regions and different periods, from the first experimental measure adopted by Warren Hastings to the end of the nineteenth century—a period of nearly a century and a quarter. No less remarkable are the various experiments about the administrative functionaries of a district, which was the administrative unit. Reference has been made above to the various changes, made from time to time, in the functions of a Collector, Magistrate and Judge. The changes in the method of administration of law and justice, revenue and finance, recruitment of junior civil services, the gradual evolution of an efficient police force, and development of communication and transport, among other things, indicate the same spirit of progressive reforms throughout the period under review. It has been said of man that his true glory lies, not in never falling, but in rising every time that he falls. Very nearly the same credit goes to the British administrators, as a class.

The process of continuous development sustained by a conscious desire to improve the administration is almost a novel phenomenon in Indian history. That the attempts did not always prove successful and the results attained, not unoften, fell much below the hopes and expectation of the people, have been abundantly shown in the

preceding pages. But such criticism of these measures must be tempered by several considerations.

In the first place, it must be remembered that there is no record in history of a body of foreigners ruling over a conquered country from purely philanthropic motives. The idea of exploiting a foreign conquered country, which the rulers do not intend to make their home, may be regarded as almost inherent in human nature, though there may be difference in degree, and in method, among the various conquering nations whose record has reached us. But in making comparative estimates one consideration heavily weighs in favour of the British. By the very nature of circumstances, the British administrators had to put on record their most secret designs and inmost thoughts, desires, and motives, which ordinarily are never known to outsiders. They, as well as their system, are therefore ruthlessly exposed to criticism such as rarely falls upon other foreign rulers who have, comparatively speaking, left much fewer records of this nature. Much of the criticism directed against the British in this volume is based on such records, which were never intended for public eyes. Ellenborough, Dalhousie, or Lytton to mention only a few, would probably have appeared in a different light, and their actions much less condemned, if their secret despatches were not revealed to the public gaze. Similarly, the general attitude of the British Government towards India would have been much less exposed to criticism if their correspondence with the Government of India were hidden from public view. A further untoward event of a similar nature was the otherwise praiseworthy activity of a few liberal-minded Britons who unsparingly criticized the conduct of their fellow-countrymen and scathingly condemned their activities in India. In all these respects the British rulers of India have been subjected to misfortunes which have rarely fallen upon other colonial powers like the French, the Dutch or the Spanish. To make matters worse, the people of the British dominions in India were much more advanced in culture and civilization than those of the colonies ruled by the other European nations named above and hence more quick in their reaction to, and exposure of, injustice and misrule, and more vocal in agitation and public denunciation than has been the case with the other subject nations of European powers.

For all these reasons it is very difficult to form a proper estimate of British rule in India as compared with foreign rule in other countries in the nineteenth century. No less difficult is the task of the historian to form a just view of the general nature of British rule in India. The first question that confronts him is the standard of judgment. A modern historian naturally looks upon the adminis-

tration of nineteenth century India from the same standpoint as he adopts in respect of other countries, and is influenced by the thoughts and ideals with which the latest progress in human culture has made him familiar. The criticism of British rule in this volume also consciously or unconsciously follows the same process. It may be argued, however, that a more rational procedure would be to view the British rule in India in the background of its past history. In *other words, the British administrative system is to be judged,* not by the standard of Europe in the nineteenth century, but in the light of what prevailed in India, either immediately before the advent of the British, or, more properly, during the best epochs of her history. The first of these alternatives is obviously unfair, as a period of transition can never be regarded as the normal one, and the whole course of Indian history shows how such periods of anarchy and confusion, usually following the downfall of an empire, were always merely preludes to an efficient and stable form of government.

The second alternative, seemingly more rational, suffers from a subtle illusion. It is based on the presumption that India in the nineteenth century, even at its best, would have been more or less a replica of India under the Mughuls or the Mauryas and the Guptas who had carried the administration to the highest pitch of efficiency. Such a presumption, however, ignores the world tendencies of progress, which undoubtedly influenced even the British administrators in India. It is, of course, a moot point to decide how far these tendencies would have operated in India even if the British or any other European power would not have ruled there. It is useless to speculate on a subject like this, but it is not irrelevant to point out that even in contemporary Britain itself the standard of administration was not very high as compared with India, at the time when she passed under British rule. This is proved, among others, by the state of civil and criminal law, administration of justice, the existence of slavery and slave trade, the inactivity of the State regarding education, poor law, and factory labourers, religious intolerance which imposed various disabilities on a section of the population, social and economic inequality, and the absence of any real popular form of Government.

In spite of all these handicaps, the administration of Britain reached a high degree of efficiency by the end of the nineteenth century. The examples of Japan in the nineteenth and of Turkey in the twentieth century demonstrate the capacity of oriental peoples also to progress in the same lines on their own initiative unaided by any foreign interventions. The cases of China or Persia may, no doubt, be cited against such inference, but instances of less

progressive nations are not wanting even in Europe, and Spain, Poland or Italy may serve as examples. In view of all these considerations it is difficult to decide, one way or the other, how far India could have evolved an efficient system of administration by her own unaided efforts. Without dogmatizing, therefore, on the benefits of British rule, in the sense generally used, it would be more relevant to our present purpose to refer to the most significant characteristics of the British system of administration in India.

The first thing that strikes the eye is the application of modern humanitarian ideas and scientific inventions of the west to the improvement of administration in India. The spread of modern education in higher branches of art and science, the reform of prisons, care of juvenile offenders, abolition of the barbarous cruelties and tortures of the Medieval Age, improvement of primitive tribes, abolition of slavery and social abuses, etc. may be cited as instances of the former, while improved schemes of famine relief, improvement in transport and communication by means of roads, railways, steamers, telegraphs and cheap postage, new methods of irrigation and scientific development of forests, etc. are the results of the latter.

As a result of the progressive character mentioned above, there is no doubt that the administration reached a high degree of efficiency in the second half of the nineteenth century. The glaring abuses in the settlement of land-revenue were partially removed, though much still remained to be done to make a real improvement in the miserable condition of the peasants. Indeed the poverty of the masses remained the chief plague-spot in the annals of British Indian administration. Although conclusive evidence is lacking, all the available data indicate a positive worsening of the situation in this respect during the British regime. On the other hand, the executive and judicial branches of administration attained a degree of efficiency which India is not known to have reached at any previous period. And this efficiency was based upon certain fundamental principles which were quite novel in Indian history. The first was the impersonal character of the administration as against personal rule which dominated Indian administration in pre-British period. Personal character, no doubt, still counted for much, but it ceased to be an effective, far less the deciding, factor in an administration which was developed as a machine and worked as such. It was the handiwork of generations of British administrators who, being selected by the severe test of competitive examinations from among the flowers of youth attracted by a high salary, represented almost the very best that Great Britain could offer. It has rarely been the good fortune of a country to be ruled by successive bands of such

high intellectuals for more than half a century. No wonder, therefore, that in spite of the many drawbacks of the members of the Indian Civil Service, they made magnificent contribution to the development of the administrative machinery. The efficiency and freedom from corruption which they displayed as a class were hardly known before, and will probably remain the ideal and despair of many generations of Indians. Except in respect of the Europeans, whose number must always have been very few, as compared with the Indians, the Judges, Magistrates, and Collectors set up a very high standard of impartiality and integrity, and maintained it, to a large extent, among all ranks of subordinate officers. But it was as much due to the individuals occupying these high posts, as to the tradition which they as a body had gradually built up, that the administration worked so successfully and well. "Men may come and men may go, but I go for ever"—never was this line of Tennyson more true than of the administrative machinery set up by the British in India. Members of the I.C.S. came and went, but they formed a part of the machinery, and their individual character hardly influenced its static character. This machinery was so strong and stable that nothing could easily move it off its beaten track,—neither the Governor-General nor even the British Cabinet. It was the steel frame on which the structure of the British Indian empire rested. There might have been tinkerings and decoration on the surface of the building, but the inner frame remained intact down to the end of the British rule. The system, however, had its shortcomings which have been described by a member of the British I.C.S as follows:

> "This machine-like character of the administration was the source of both weakness and strength. Its defect was that it produced a lack of sensitiveness to the feelings of the people and to new currents of thoughts and desires, which sometimes led to trouble. Moreover, it bred a race of administrators who were accused of conscientious aloofness. Indian politicians have often complained that though British officials worked zealously for the country, they did not love or understand its people. This was often not true of individual District Officers and others whose main work was in the villages rather than in their offices, but as an indictment of the spirit of British rule it is not entirely untrue. British Governments in India were apt to consider the welfare rather than the feelings of Indians. This tendency became stronger in the twentieth century when political differences estranged the British officials from the Indian intelligentsia, though not from the rural population".**

This statement very faithfully represents the attitude of the British members of the I.C.S., and there is a ring of truth in it, if we add after the word 'welfare' the words, "as they understood it, and subject to the demands of British interests, and their claim for prior

consideration". The defects pointed out in the above statement will be considered in detail in Chapter XLVIII.

Another important characteristic of British administration was the rule of law rather than of traditions and conventions, and likes, dislikes, whims and desires of persons occupying positions of authority. It is, of course, impossible to eliminate these elements altogether from any system of administration, but the British carried it to the furthest limits. It was definitely laid down, and worked in practice, that every person was subject to law and not to caprice of any person, however highly placed, and that even the highest executive or judicial functionary was amenable to law An indirect consequence of all these was the evolution of an elaborate legal system leading to codification of laws, and the creation of a body of trained lawyers, jurists, and judges. All these were not certainly unknown to India in the past, but were probably never carried into practice to the same extent as during the British rule A corollary of this idea of rule of law was the equality of all before the law, which was an altogether novel feature in India Nobody occupied any higher legal status than his neighbours or enjoyed any preferential treatment in the law courts during the British régime This was certainly unknown to the caste-ridden Hindu society and the Islamic conception of State Here, again, the European community formed an exception in both these respects, but the scale was held even between one Indian and another

Another corollary of the rule of law was the personal liberty enjoyed by the meanest subject in British India. The principle of *Habeas Corpus* was in force in British India and no one could be arrested or kept in prison, without a written order and except in conformity to legal procedure, even though the Governor-General willed it. It would have appeared incredible to Aśoka, Samudragupta, Akbar and Aurangzib not to speak of others, that their mere verbal order or wish was not sufficient to kill or imprison a person. The Native States of India followed the old rule and offered a striking contrast to British India in this respect.

Another very important and distinctive feature of British administration was its non-interference in social and religious matters. During both the Hindu and Muslim periods, the freedom of an individual was severely circumscribed in these all-important spheres of life But the British went almost to the opposite extreme. While it indicated its liberal spirit by suppressing glaring cruelties, such as *Sati*, infanticide, hook-swinging, etc, it seldom interfered in the social and religious customs of the Indians. In this respect the British made a distinct departure from the Hindu and Muslim rule

Another great feature of the British administration is the restoration of order and security after the anarchy and confusion of nearly a century and half. The suppression of dacoits, particularly of that special branch of it known as *Thugs*, must be regarded as a remarkable achievement.

Last, but not the least in importance, is the establishment of a uniform system of administration with English as the court language all over this great sub-continent. This, together with the development of transport and communication by means of improving old roads and building new ones, opening up of railways and telegraphs, and introducing cheap postage, transformed the face of the country and ushered in the conception of one India to which reference will be made in Vol. X.

What has been said above, shows only one side of the picture. The other side is heavily dotted by defects and deficiencies and grave errors of commission and omission, most of which proceeded from the fundamental fact of one country being ruled and exploited for the interest of another. It would be idle to deny the fact that the British rule in India was, in its ultimate analysis, the rule *of* one people *by* another people and *for* another people, in direct violation of the principles of democracy laid down by Abraham Lincoln. The interests of the British people and the safety of British rule in India were the dominant considerations; the welfare of the people was also an important guiding principle, but strictly subordinate to the above two. This fact must be frankly recognized, and if we add to it the excusable ignorance of the British about India and the inexcusable racial arrogance of the British in India, we find an explanation of most of the charges that can be legitimately brought against the British administration.

It was in the interest of the British people that the trade and industry of India were deliberately crippled, and her currency and customs duties were manipulated to the disadvantage of her people. All this and the top-heavy civil and military administration, manned mostly by high-salaried European officers, account for the oppressive taxation and land-revenue and the grinding poverty of the people, punctuated by occasional famine, and normal denial of the barest minimum necessaries of life—even according to the standard of the east—to more than half,—according to some, three-fourths of the people of India.

The racial arrogance, added to the idea of exploitation, accounts for the insolent conduct of the Englishmen in general towards the Indians, as well as occasional assaults, sometimes proving fatal, of

natives by Europeans, and the atrocities perpetrated by the British planters of indigo and tea, with the connivance, if not encouragement, of their fellow-countrymen. The nature of these and their consequences have been discussed elsewhere, and need not be referred to in detail here. It will suffice to state that not only these crimes, but also, and perhaps still more, the fact that they could be committed practically with impunity, constitute a great blot on the British administration in India.

So far one is on sure grounds. But there are certain aspects of British administration, in respect of which it is not so easy either to pronounce a definite verdict, or to trace the causes. The exclusion of the Indians from senior services in all branches—judicial, police, medical, etc., is a case in point. Indians of all shades of opinion have strongly denounced this policy, but Englishmen have sought to defend this on different grounds. Three typical views of Englishmen on this subject may be quoted, which also illustrate some fundamental assumptions on which the British rule was based in India.

The first view, described by Mr. Seton-Karr,[227] Secretary, Bengal Government, was based on

"the cherished conviction which was shared by every Englishman in India, from the highest to the lowest, by the planter's assistant in his lonely bungalow and by the editor in the full light of the Presidency town—from these to the Chief Commissioner in charge of an important province and to the Viceroy on his throne—the conviction in every man that he belongs to a race whom God has destined to govern and subdue"[228]

The second was expressed by Lord Roberts as follows:

"It is this consciousness of the inherent superiority of the European which has won for us India. However well educated and clever a native may be, and however brave he may have proved himself, I believe that no rank which we can bestow upon him would cause him to be considered as an equal by the British officer".[229]

The third view was expressed by a retired I.C.S. official after the end of the British rule. Referring to the resentment of Indians against the British Government for "dilatoriness in the matter of Indianisation", Sir Percival Griffiths observes:

"Many Indians today resent the assumption that in the nineteenth century these considerations (of people's welfare) necessarily excluded their forefathers from high administrative posts. In view, however, of the deplorable state of Indian education at that time and of the almost universal corruption which had characterised the late Mughal Empire, the Government of India were perhaps justified in their hesitation. Complete integrity in administration was a new thing, even in England, but by the middle of the nineteenth century it had there taken very firm root. Young Englishmen from the universities would inevitably bring to India a new tradition of incorruptibility and provided they were in an overwhelming majority, their spirit would permeate the services and give Indian admi-

nistration a fresh start. It would be difficult to assert that for such a process three generations was too long a period. It is perhaps on account of the slow pace of Indianisation, that as Indians came into the I.C.S. they, too, absorbed and became proud of its spirit and tradition and that when independence was achieved they were fully ready for the tasks ahead. That readiness may well be regarded as one of Britain's signal success in India'.[230]

The third view is an attempt to justify the conduct of the British on rational grounds, as against the two previous views which Englishmen in modern days naturally feel reluctant to acknowledge as true. There is, however, little doubt that the mentality revealed in the first two quotations powerfully influenced the action of the British, even if it be admitted that it did not prove the decisive factor. Nevertheless, the argument of Sir Percival needs serious consideration. It means, in effect, that what is regarded as a defect in an otherwise good system is really an integral part of it; you cannot take one part and reject the other; either you take the whole or have none of it. The justification of the British administrators' aloofness from the public also rests on similar grounds, as the passage quoted above on p. 868 will show. Here, again, the seemingly defective element goes or falls with the otherwise excellent whole. There is perhaps more truth in this than in the other assertion. The British administration owed its excellence, to a large extent, to its character like a lifeless machine. Infusion of life would make it more acceptable but perhaps less effective. This view has much to commend itself. The British administrative system, as it emerged at the end of the period under review, must be judged as a whole—with all its good and evils as essential parts. It could not be substantially modified without changing its entire character.

This chapter may be fittingly concluded with some observations on British rule by two Indians eminent in two spheres of life, namely, Bankimchandra Chatterji,[231] the author of *Vande Mataram* song, and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. They are by no means unfriendly critics, and represent the enlightened and liberal section of Indians, respectively, of the last half of the nineteenth and the first of the twentieth century.

1. Bankimchandra Chatterji.

In his essay on "Independence and Dependence of India", Bankimchandra makes a comparative estimate of the merits and defects of the British Government in India. He says that ancient India was independent in the sense that the kings were Indians and lived in India. Now the monarch lives in England. The interest of distant dependencies is sometimes sacrificed to the interest of the country in which the monarch lives. But on the other hand the despotic and licentious character of the monarch in ancient India often entailed great hardship and misery on the people. Now India is ruled from England by the bureaucratic system, and so the personal character of the monarch does not affect the fortune of Indian

people. Bankimchandra wrote a brilliant satire in 1875 in *Bangadarshan* to show how the bureaucratic system resembles a machine. In that satire he exposed the red-tapism of the system and showed how the machine works almost automatically, irrespective of the personal merits or defects of the Lieutenant-Governor.[82]

He then shows that the distinction which now exists between an Englishman and an Indian is far less galling than the distinction which existed between the Brāhmans and the Śūdras. In British India there is one law for the English and the Indians, but in ancient India there were different laws for the Brahmans and Śūdras. An Indian judge cannot decide the case in which an Englishman is involved; but could the Śūdras ever decide the case of a Brāhman? Dwarakanath Mitra is now a judge of the High Court, where would he have been in the "Rāma-Rājya?"[83]

Bankim regarded the happiness of the masses as far more important than independence. As he characteristically put it: "To the oppressed, it is immaterial whether the oppressor was his own fellow-countryman or a foreigner. The oppression by the former was not sweeter or less bitter than that by a foreigner."[84] Rāja Rammohan Roy held that the loss of political power was compensated for by the recognition of the principles of civil liberty in British India. It is significant that Bankim, burning with indignation at the oppression of the ryots, does not lay stress on civil liberty. According to him, the loss of political power has been compensated for by the introduction of European science and literature. In conclusion he says, that in modern India the Brāhmans and the Kshatriyas have been degraded in status while the status of the Śūdras has been slightly improved.

Bankimchandra drew the attention of the Government "to the wretched condition of the peasants of Bengal. The general trend of his argument is that despite their good intentions the British Indian administrators have made mistakes at every step in land legislation as these mistakes are responsible for the misery of the peasants it is up to the Government to give all possible redress to them without actually overthrowing the Permanent Settlement. He shows how all the land legislation from the time of Lord Cornwallis to the time of Lord Dalhousie has been in favour of the landlord and against the *ryots*. The first and the greatest of all blunders committed by the English was to recognize the farmers of land revenue as the absolute owners of land by the Permanent Settlement. Bankimchandra maintained that the Permanent Settlement ought to have been made with the cultivators, who had been recognised as owners of land from time immemorial.

Bankimchandra Chatterji, being himself a Deputy Magistrate, had first-hand information regarding the administration of law and justice. He said "courts and brothels are of the same type; unless one is ready to pay for it one can have no admittance to either of these". The burden of Bankimchandra's complaints against the judicial system is that the poor are not protected by law in British India against the oppression of the rich. The courts are open to those only who can afford to pay for the judicial stamp, for pleaders, for entertaining the witnesses and for the gratification of the peons and clerks of the court. Even if a man stakes his all for securing justice he cannot be sure that justice will be really administered in his case. Bankim is extremely grieved to see that every day the poor *ryots* are being most shamelessly and tyrannically oppressed by the Zamindars. He asks, "How is it that in spite of the existence of good laws and judicial courts the Zamindars, who are legally guilty, are not punished?. . . . . What kind of law is that by which the weak alone are punished and which is not applicable to the powerful?

He points out five cardinal defects which have conspired to defeat the ends of justice. First, the prohibitive expenses of judicial trials. The expensiveness debars the poor peasants from seeking judicial redress for their grievances. The rich *Zamindars* can harass the poor *ryot* by filing a suit against him. The judicial system has become a tool in the hands of the rich to oppress the poor. Secondly, the courts are located at a great distance from the villages. The peasants cannot afford and do not dare to leave their hearth and home in order to file a suit against the *Gomasta* of the *Zamindar*. The *Gomasta* has really become arbiter in cases between peasants and peasants, but there is no redress where he himself is the oppressor. Thirdly, the dilatoriness of the system makes the peasants unwilling to appeal to law. Like Rammohan, Bankimchandra, too, attributes this delay to the insufficiency of the number of judges and to the complexity of the legal system. Fourthly, the legal system has departed from equity and rationality. He attributes part of the defect to the lack of education of the Indian jury. Fifthly, the judges are not competent. The incompetence is due to the want of familiarity of the English judges with the condition of the country. Though most of the subordinate judges and a few of the superior-judges are Indians, yet the system as a whole is dominated by the English judges. The Indian judges have to listen to the dictates of the English judges and to decide cases in such a way that the decision might not be set aside in appeal by the latter.[m]

2. Jawaharlal Nehru

Referring to the effect of the revolt of 1857-8 upon the British administration of India Nehru makes the following observations: "The techniques of British rule, which had already been well established, were now clarified and confirmed and deliberately acted upon. Essentially these were· the creation and protection of vested interests bound up with British rule; and a policy of balancing and counterpoise of different elements, and the encouragement of fissiparous tendencies and division amongst them.

"The Princes and the big landlords were the basic vested interests thus created and encouraged. But now a new class, even more tied up with British rule, grew in importance. This consisted of the Indian members of the services, usually in subordiate positions. Previously the employment of Indians had been avoided except when this could not be helped, and Munro had pleaded for such employment. Experience had now demonstrated that Indians so employed were so dependent on the British administration and rule that they could be relied upon and treated as agents of that rule. In the pre-Mutiny days most of the Indian members of the subordinate services had been Bengalis. These had spread out over the upper provinces wherever the British administration needed clerks and the like in its civil or military establishments. Regular colonies of Bengalis had thus grown up at the administrative or military centres in the United Provinces, Delhi and even in the Punjab. These Bengalis accompanied the British armies and proved faithful employees to them. They became associated in the minds of the rebels with the British Power and were greatly disliked by them and given uncomplimentary titles.

"Thus began the process of the indianization of the administrative machine in its subordinate ranks, all real power and initiative being, however, concentrated in the hands of the English personnel. As English education spread, the Bengalis had no longer a virtual monopoly of service and other Indians came in, both on the judicial and executive sides of the administration. This indianization became the most effective method of strengthening British rule. It created a civil army and garrison everywhere, which was more important even than the military army

of occupation. There were some members of this civil army who were able and patriotic and nationalistically inclined, but like the soldier, who also may be patriotic in his individual capacity, they were bound up by the army code and discipline, and the price of disobedience, desertion and revolt was heavy. Not only was this civil army created but the hope and prospect of employment in it affected and demoralized a vast and growing number of others. There was a measure of prestige and security in it and a pension at the end of the term of service, and if a sufficient subservience was shown to one's superior officers, other failings did not count. These civil employees were the intermediaries between the British authorities and the people, and if they had to be obsequious to their superiors, they could be arrogant and exact obedience from their own inferiors and the people at large.

"The lack of other avenues of employment, other ways of making a living, added additional importance to government service. A few could become lawyers or doctors, but even so, success was by no means assured. Industry hardly existed. Trade was largely in the hands of certain hereditary classes who had a peculiar aptitude for it and who helped each other. The new education did not fit any one for trade or industry; its chief aim was government service. Education was so limited as to offer a few openings for a professional career; other social services were almost non-existent. So government service remained and, as the colleges poured out their graduates, even the growing government services could not absorb them all, and a fierce competition arose. The unemployed graduates and others formed a pool from which government could always draw; they were a potential threat to the security of even the employed. Thus the British Government in India became not only the biggest employer but, for all practical purposes, the sole big employer (including railways), and a vast bureaucratic machine was built up strictly managed and controlled at the top. This enormous patronage was exercised to strengthen the British hold on the country, to crush discordant and disagreeable elements, and to promote rivalry and discord amongst various groups anxiously looking forward to employment in government service. It led to demoralisation and conflict, and the government could play one group against the other."[20]

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1 See pp 313 ff
2 Quoted in Dutt—II, 227. It may be noted that a vigorous plea on behalf of the East India Company's rule in India was put forward by an Indian (probably Kishorichand Mitra) in an anonymous publication entitled, "*The Mutinies, the Government, and the People*" by a Hindu (1858).
3 Dutt—II, 227-8.
4 Ibid, 228.
5 Ibid, 228-9.
6 P Mukherji—*Indian Constitutional Documents*, 123.
7 Ibid, 355, f n.; Dutt—II, 231.
8 For the full text, cf. Mukherji, op cit., 355 ff.; A B Keith, *Speeches and Documents on Indian Policy*, I. 382 ff.
9. H. Dodwell, *A Sketch of the History of India*, p. 29.
9a Strachey, *India, its Administration and Progress* (3rd edition, p. 112).
10. For the quotation, cf. Dodwell, op. cit., 34.
11 *Montford Report*, para. 34.
11a. Ibid.
12. Mallet, *Life of Lord Northbrook*, p. 91.
13. *Montford Report*, para. 34.
14. Dodwell, op. cit., p. 36.
15. *Montford Report*, para. 33.
16. Ramsay Macdonald, *The Government of India*, pp. 50-51.
17. Dodwell, op. cit., 47-8.
18. Ibid, 35.
19. See pp. 751-2.

20. *Montford Report*, para. 34,
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid.
23. See pp. 342-3
24. Sir Charles Wood's speech on 6 June, while moving the Act of 1861 (Mukherji, op. cit., 168-9)
25. Major Graham, *Life and Work of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan*, pp 26-7.
25a. *Montford Report*, para 60.
26. Ilbert, Sir Courtenay, *The Government of India*, p 100. See Clause 19 for other details.
27. *Simon Commission's Report*, para 132.
28. Mukherji, op. cit., 174.
29. Ibid, 174-5.
30. Ibid, p. xxxv.
31. Ibid, xxxvi.
32. Lady Betty Balfour, *Lord Lytton's Indian Administration*. quoted in Mukherji, op. cit., p. xxxvi.
32a. "Their constituency was Government House and they were true to it. But it should not be thought that there were no exceptions to this inglorious rule. There were bound to be, for they included Vishwanath Narayan Mandlik, and in after years, before there was the semblance of election, there were some nominated members of the type of Dadabhai Naoroji, Ranade, Telang, Tyabji and Mehta in Bombay; Kristo Das Pal and Raja Peary Mohan Mukherji in Bengal, Sir S. Subramania Iyer in Madras, and the late Pandit Ajodhia Nath in the United Provinces (then called the North-Western Provinces) When the import duty on Lancashire Textile goods was abolished in the name of free trade, one of the members was Mandlik His protest having proved unavailing, he appeared the next day in Council in the homespun country cloth, now known as khaddar and he frankly said that he did so as a political protest" (C Y. Chintamani, *Indian Politics since the Mutiny*, 14-5)
33. Parliamentary Debates, 1892—Fourth Series, Vol III, p 95
33a. Chintamani, op cit., 14
34. For the Resolutions passed by the Indian National Congress, cf the Proceedings of the different Sessions. A classified list of Resolutions according to topics is given in *Congress in Evolution* by D Chakrabarty and C Bhattacharya (hereafter referred to as 'Congress')
35. Lyall, *Life of Dufferin*, II 151-2
36. *Montford Report* para 67
37. Ibid para 68
38. Ibid, para 69
39. Keith, op cit, II 47-8, 55
40. Ibid, 71
41. Ibid, 60
42. Ibid, 59
43. Ibid, 63-5
44. Curzon's views about the Indian National Congress will be referred to later
45. Parliamentary Debates, Fourth Series, Vol III, 1892, p 94
46. Ibid, 60-68
47. Ibid, 51-131
48. Keith, II 61-2.
49. Ibid, 75
50. *Montford Report*, para 89.
51. V Chirol *India Old and New*, p 94
52. See pp 320-21
53. Sir John Strachey, *The Finances and Public Works of India*, p 131
54. Mukherji, op cit, p lii.
55. Ibid, liii
56. For the text of the Resolution from which some passages are quoted below, cf Mukherji, op. cit, 399 ff.
57. Strachey op cit (Quoted in Mukherji, op cit, p. lv).
58. Mukherji, op cit, lvi
59. Ibid, lvi-lvii
60. Ibid, lviii.
61. Ibid, lix.

62. Ibid, lxi.
63. Ibid, lxii.
64. Ibid, lxiii.
65. See p. 758.
66. C. E. Buckland, *Bengal under the Lieutenant-Governors* (1901), I. 537.
67. J. Ramsay Macdonald, *The Government of India*, p. 199,
68. Collection from the Records of Papers relating to the separation of Judicial and Executive functions.
69. Sir John Strachey, *India, its Administration and Progress* (3rd edn), 364. For the position of the Magistrate, cf Ch XX of this work.
70. Strachey, op. cit., 360; Hunter, *Indian Empire* (1892), p. 573. Also cf. *Bengal Administration* Report, 1911-2, pp. 54-5; *Imp. Gaz.*, IV (1907), pp. 49 ff.
71. Buckland, op. cit., I. 227-8.
72. *CHI*, VI. 359.
73. *A Nation in Making*, p. 10.
74. Speech in Parliament, quoted in *CHI*, VI. 360.
75. W. J. Bryan, *British Rule in India*. p. 13. Only a part of it, which is generally known, is quoted by Andrews and Mookerjee, *The Rise and Growth of the Congress in India*, p. 76
76. Ramsay Macdonald, op. cit., 102.
76a. Buckland, II. 666 ff
77. *CHI*, VI. 366-7.
78. Ibid, 368
79. Ibid, 369-70 The resolution was moved by Mr. Herbert Paul and supported by Dadabhai Naoroji, who was then a member of the House of Commons "The passing of the resolution fell like a bombshell upon the official world" in India The Secretary of State for India held that it was a snatch vote, and that the Government of India was not bound by it It was not surprising that the Government of India and the Local Governments would oppose it, and the reference to their views was only a decent way to get over the situation. The thing that was really surprising is that the Government of Madras should have supported it For further interesting details, cf. Banerji, S N., *A Nation in Making*, 132-4.
80. Ibid, 371
81. Strachey, op. cit., 95.
82. For this Act, see Mukherji, op. cit, 344.
83. Ilbert, op cit., 104, Mukherji, op cit., 351
84. Chailley, J., *Administrative Problems of British India*, p. 458.
85. Strachey, op. cit., 118.
86. Ibid, 111
87. Ibid.
88. Surendranath Banerjea, *A Nation in Making*, p 86
89. The figures are taken from Dutt—II, Chapters X, XIII.
90. *Report of the Bombay Association*, 1871, p. 512 (quoted in Dutt—II, 381-2)
91. Evidence before the Select Committee on Indian Finance, 1873 (quoted in Dutt—II, 385).
92. See p 774.
93. Dutt—II, 401-2.
94. Ibid, 403-4. The italics are not in the original.
95. Ibid, 405-7.
96. Ibid, 408.
97. Ibid, 410.
98. Ibid, 410-11.
99. Ibid, 411-12.
99a. Ibid, 414.
99b. Strachey claimed that these were the principles on which customs legislation of the United Kingdom had been based and "are now admitted axioms by all who recognize the theoretic advantages of free trade" (Strachey, op cit., 278).
100. Dutt—II, 541.
101. Ibid, 543-4.
102. See pp. 628, 635-37.
103. See pp. 537, 636.
104. See p. 371.
105. *CHI*, VI. 50

106. Baden Powell, *Land Revenue Administration in India* (1882), p. 384.
107. Baden Powell, *Land Revenue Systems of British India* (1892), II. 246-50.
108. See p. 780.
109. *Settlement Report of Sagar*, by Col. Maclean, 1867, paras 93-4 (Dutt—II, 294).
110. Letter No. 353, dated November 30, 1867, from the Government of India (Foreign Department) to the Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces (Dutt—II, 294).
111 Dutt—II. 304-5.
111a. Ibid, 305-6.
112. Ibid, 306-7.
113. Ibid, 475.
114. Ibid, 478-9
115. Ibid, 481-2.
116. Cf. the Table given in Dutt—II, 483.
117. Ibid, 268-9.
118. Ibid, 462-3.
119. Ibid, 463.
120. Ibid, 270.
121. Ibid,
122. Ibid, 308-9.
123. Ibid, 310.
124. See p. 366.
125. Dutt—II, 311.
126. Ibid, 322.
127. Minute of the Governor of Bombay, dated 3 March, 1862 (quoted in Dutt—II, 323).
128. Dutt—II, 332.
129. Ibid, 329.
130. Ibid, 332.
131. Ibid, 333.
132. Ibid, 334.
133. Ibid, 490.
134. Ibid, 492.
135 Ibid, 492-3, f n., 2.
136. Sir Frederick Currie's Note of Dissent (quoted in Dutt—II, 393). For the views of the Government of Bengal, Cf. Buckland, op. cit., I 440 For the view-point of the Secretary of State, see the Despatch, dated 12 May, 1870, from the Duke of Argyll to the Government of India, quoted in Buckland, I, 441-455.
136a. Dutt—II, 398.
137. This was urged as a strong argument in favour of the Bengal *Zamindars*, but the Secretary of State denied that, by implication, it prevented the imposition of additional cess on permanently settled estates (cf para. 14 of his Despatch, Buckland, I 418).
138. Dutt—II, 399-400.
139. Ibid, 502
140 Baird Smith's Report of 14 August, 1861, para. 36 (quoted in Dutt—II, 273-4).
140a. Dutt—II, 275.
141 Letter from the Government of the Punjab to the Government of India, dated 24 April, 1862 (quoted in Dutt—II, 276). The Government of N.W.P. agreed to introduce Permanent Settlement on certain conditions stated in the Minute of the Lieutenant-Governor, dated 27 May, 1862, and the minute of Sir William Muir, 5 December, 1861.
142. Letter of the Madras Government to the Government of India, No. 241, dated 8 February, 1862.
143. Letter from the Bombay Government to the Government of India, No. 1627, dated 23 April, 1862.
144. Letter from the Chief Commissioner, Central Provinces, to the Government of India, No. 532, dated 22 July (quoted in Dutt—II, 299).
145. Minute of Samuel Lang, dated 7 April, 1862 (quoted in Dutt—II, 281-2).
146 For Wood's Despatch, cf. Dutt—II, 284-6. For Lawrence's views, cf. Dutt—II, 283.
147. Dutt—II, 288.
148. Ibid, 288-9.

149. This and the two following paras originally formed parts of Chapter XXXVII written by Dr. A. Tripathi. He is also responsible for the references to the letters from the Governments of N.W.P., Madras, and Bombay, quoted in footnotes 141, 142, and 143.
150. Argyll to Northbrook, 3 September, 1872, Northbrook Papers (C.R.O), p. 20. But the opinion was also held by his own eminent Councillors like Erskine Perry, Macnaghten, Frederick Currie, H. T. Prinsep, Robert Montgomery and F. Halliday.
151. Argyll to Northbrook, 25 April, 1873, ibid, p. 52.
152 Same to same, 13 February, 1874, ibid, p. 118; also Northbrook to Argyll, 22 May, 1873, ibid, p. CXXX.
153. Argyll to Northbrook, 23 May, 1873, ibid., p. 55.
154. Same to same, 28 May, ibid., p. 56.
155. Same to same, 13 February, 1874, ibid., p. 117.
156 Northbrook to Argyll, 3 October, 1872, ibid., p. LVII.
157 Dutt—II, 289.
158. Ibid, 506-7.
159 R.C. Dutt, *Famines and Land Assessments in India* (1910). Preface, pp. xv-xvi.
160 Paras 5-6, (quoted in Dutt—II. 508-9).
161. Dutt—II, 509.
162. Ibid. 281-2
163 Ibid, 509 ff.
164 See p 822.
165 Dutt, II, 274.
166. Sir George Campbell, *Memoirs of my Indian Career*, II. 149.
167 Ibid, 151.
168. Ibid, 152
169. Ibid, 153-8.
170 Ibid, 152-3.
171 Ibid, 159-64.
172 Ibid, 321
173 Ibid, 323
174 *Report of the Famine Commission*, 1878-80.
175 Ibid.
176 *Report of the Famine Commission*, 1901, p. 2.
177 Campbell, op. cit., II. 336.
178 Quoted in *CHI*, VI 301
179 Strachey, op. cit, 246.
180 Lovat Fraser, *India under Curzon and after*, p 283
180a *Report of the Famine Commission*, 1901, p 3, para. 11.
180b Ibid, p. 11, para. 30.
181 See pp. 808 ff.
182 See p. 826
183 See p. 826.
184. *RPD*, 106.
185 Campbell, op cit, 323
186. RPD, 106; Digby, W. *Prosperous British India*.
187 See p. 383.
188. *Imp. Gaz.*, IV. 390-405.
189 Vol. I, 487; II. 63; IV. 247-8.
190 Minute dated 7 November, 1830 (quoted in Dutt—II, 197).
191 See p. 774
192 Mukherji, op. cit., 411.
193 *Imp. Gaz.*, IV. 288.
194. Cf. para. 23 of the Resolution, quoted above, p. 775
195. *Imp. Gaz.*, IV. 287.
196 *Report of the Committee on Local Self-Government in Madras*, 1882, p. 9, (quoted in *CHI*, VI. 534).
197 Mukherji, op. cit., 408.
197a. Various changes in the constitution of Municipalities and Rural Boards were made between the years 1888 and 1911. A general review of the resulting state of things will be given in Vol. XI.
198. *CHI*, VI. 523-4.
199. Ibid, 525.
200 See p. 424.

201. *Imp Gaz.*, IV. 342.
202 Ibid, *CHI*, VI. 395.
203. *Imp Gaz.*, IV. 342-3.
204 Ibid, 345
205 Ibid, 347.
206 Ibid, 347.
207 *CHI*, VI. 399.
208 Sir Thomas Raleigh *Lord Curzon in India*. Introduction. p. 1.
208a For the documents and quoted passages cf. Fraser, Lovat, pp 431-447.
209 *Imp Gaz.*, IV. 343.
210 See p 384
211 (1) The East Indian (2) The Indian Peninsular; (3) The Madras, (4) The Bombay Baroda Central Indian (5) The Eastern Bengal; (6) The Indian Branch, subsequently the Oudh and Rohilkhand; (7) Sind Punjab and Delhi, subsequently merged into the North-Western State Railway, and (8) The Great Southern India, subsequently the South Indian Railway
212 C P Tiwari, *The Indian Railways* p 252
213 N B Mehta, *Indian Railways*, p. 36
214 Ibid, 43
215 *Report of the Indian Road Development Committee*, 1927-8, para. 17
216 *Imp Gaz.*, III 408
217 Ibid, 360
218 Ibid, 361
219 Ibid, 359
220 Report of 1872 (quoted in Dutt -II, 360 61)
221 Lady Hope *Life of Sir Arthur Cotton* (quoted in Dutt -II 362 f n, 1)
222 *Parliamentary Report of 1878* (quoted in Dutt-II, 365)
223 Dutt—II 366
224 Ibid, 367-8
225 *Famine Commission's Report* 1880 (quoted in Dutt II 369)
226 Sir Percival Griffiths *The British Impact on India* 227 f
227 For Mr Seton-Karr See Ch XXIX section IV
228 Griffiths, op cit 202
229 Ibid
230 Ibid, pp 195-6
231 The greatest literary figure in the nineteenth century whose valuable contribution to the Indian renaissance will be referred to in Vol X
232 Bankimchandra, being a Deputy-Magistrate was familiar with the Administrative System
233 "Rāma-Rājya is a popular expression for the Golden Age in ancient India.
234 Translation from the original Bengali.
235 The whole extract is almost verbatim taken from B Majumdar (464-6) The English translation of Bengali passages is mine
236 Jawaharlal Nehru, *The Discovery of India* (2nd edition), 282-4.

CHAPTER XXIX.

DISCONTENT, DISTURBANCES AND ARMED RESISTANCE

I. INTRODUCTION.

There is no doubt that the volume of discontent against the British rule in India grew apace in the post-Mutiny period; but though it had a louder vocal expression, the actual disturbances caused by it were far less in number than during the pre-Mutiny period. The reason is not far to seek. The ruthless suppression of the Mutiny caused terror, and generated a belief in the invincibility of the British power. The conviction that armed resistance against it was futile, and a general appreciation of the *Pax Britannica* that followed the Mutiny, explain the gradual subsidence of armed resistance against the authority. The only notable exception was the armed rising of the Wahabis, but it was, really speaking, no exception at all. For the Wahabi movement was a legacy of the past; its roots were deeply laid long before the outbreak of the Mutiny, though its active manifestation as an armed rebellion commenced only shortly after that event. Wahabism was finally crushed during the following decade, but it was undoubtedly one of the most important politico-religious movements in the nineteenth century, and its history as a whole has therefore been discussed in some detail.

The next important episode is the rebellion of Basudeo Balwant Phadke in Bombay in 1879. Although it was more or less a one man's show and was easily put down, it heralded a new type of armed resistance against the British which flourished on congenial soil and made itself a power to reckon with, during the first quarter of the twentieth century.

Next in point of importance may be reckoned the serious risings of the cultivators in Bengal against the indigo-planters. Apart from the horrible picture it reveals of some of the worst features of slavery in India practised by the British planters, it also holds out before us the first historical instance of that organized non-co-operation and passive resistance which proved such a mighty power in the hands of Mahatma Gandhi half a century later. In addition to these there were a number of minor disturbances of a local character, and of the various types described in Chapter XIV above. These have been briefly referred to as indicating the spirit of the time.

But although serious disturbances, not to speak of armed rebellion, were few and far between, and mostly of a local character, there were rumours and apprehensions of serious political risings on a large scale. These rumours were persistent, and even high British officials seriously apprehended such outbreaks. As will be noted later in Chapter LIII, it was some such apprehension that induced Mr. A.O. Hume to organize the Indian National Congress with a view to weaning away the Indian intelligentsia from this violent anti-British movement.[1] Mr. W. S. Blunt, who visited this country in 1883, was told by a young tea-planter that 'a new rebellion is brewing in India.'[1a] At Allahabad, Blunt had a talk with Sir Alfred Lyall, the Lieutenant-Governor: "We discussed the chances of revolution. He would not agree that it would come in five years, but perhaps in twenty. But the people of India were a weak race, and would never be able to stand alone. They would be prey to seafaring nations on their seaboard, and to the Russians and Chinese on their land frontier".[1b] Blunt also discussed the probability of a revolution with A.M. Bose, a well-known public man of Calcutta, who said the danger was very great.[1c] Sir William Wedderburn also "described the state of things at the end of Lytton's reign as bordering on revolution".[1d]

All these apprehensions, however, proved to be wrong. On what evidence they were entertained by these responsible persons, we do not know, exept in the case of Wedderburn.[1e] There is, however, no doubt, that such rumours were in the air, and were credited, because the general discontent of the people fully warranted such an assumption. In other words, the dicontent against the British rule was so bitter and wide-spread, that many persons seriously argued that such a state of things was bound to end in an open rebellion. The tea-planter, for example, who feared a rebellion, told Blunt that "in his district within the last two years the villagers have taken to cursing the English when they pass, and even throwing stones".[1f] Bose also told Blunt that 'people were losing their confidence in Lord Ripon after having lost it in the Government at home'.[1g] Surendra Nath Banerji, Blunt tells us, "was very angry at the Ilbert Bill compromise, and let slip the *gros mot* of 'revolution' in regard to it".[1h] Even some high British officials were of the same opinion. General C. G. Gordon, who had accompanied Lord Ripon as his Private Secretary, but resigned his place owing to the opposition of the covenanted Civil Service to any real reform, assured Blunt emphatically that "no reform would ever be achieved in India without a Revolution".[1i] Blunt himself also observed later: "But the more I see and hear of the state of things in India, the more convinced I am that Gordon is right. Nothing will

be done without a revolution".[1j] Blunt further elucidates his views in the two following extracts:

"The danger I foresee is that, with an immense agricultural population chronically starved, and a town population becoming every day more and more enlightened and more and more enraged at its servitude, time may not be given for the slow growth of opinion in England as to the need of change. I am convinced that if at the present moment any serious disaffection were to arise in the native army, such as occurred in 1857, it would not lead to a revolt only. It would be joined, as the other was not, by the whole people. I know that many of the most enlightened Indian thinkers dread this, and that their best hope is to make the reality of their grievances, the just causes of their anger heard in time by the English people.... Soon they may find it necessary to trust no one in the world but themselves. To-day their motto is 'Reform'; let us not drive them to make it 'Revolution' tomorrow."[k]

"The actual organization of Anglo-Indian government has become hateful to the natives of India, and however much their reason may be on the side of patience, there is a daily increasing danger of its being overpowered by a passionate sentiment evoked by some chance outbreak; nor do I believe that it will be again possible for England to master a military revolt, which would this time have the sympathy of the whole people. Moreover even if we would suppose this fear exaggerated and the evil day of revolt put off, there is yet the certainty of a Government by force becoming yearly more costly and more difficult to carry on. It is a mistake to suppose that India has ever yet been governed merely by English sword."[l]

It is generally held that *Pax Britannica* reigned supreme during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, and some even hold that peace and contentment prevailed all over the country. These ideas should be modified not only by actual cases of violent outbreaks narrated in this chapter, but still more by the wide-spread discontent among all classes of people, so vividly described by Blunt. It is also certain that throughout the era of the so-called peace, minds of many Englishmen and Indians were haunted by a vague dread of an impending calamity to the British rule.

II. RELIGIO-POLITICAL.

A. WAHABI MOVEMENT.

1. *History*.

Wahabism made its appearance in India in the early 19th century as a religious reform movement and attacked the "religious corruptions" which had crept into Muslim society. In India it had a special appeal, as many of the converts from Hinduism had brought over into their new faith ideas and practices which were contrary to the spirit of Islam.[1m] Wahabism fiercely advocated a return to the "simplicity of faith (and society) of the Prophet's Arabia",[2] and rejected "all accretions to and declensions from the pure Islam". The movement, however, soon transformed itself into a religio-political creed and it was the ambition of its founder Saiyid Ahmad of

Rai Bareilly (1786-1831) to revive and restore Muslim power in India by bringing about the overthrow of the Sikhs in the Panjāb and the British in Bengal. Saiyid Ahmad had come under the influence of Abdul Aziz, son of the famous saint of Delhi, Shah Waliullah[3] (1702-62), who had preached similar views, though less vehemently, about half a century earlier. But unlike Abdul Wahab of Nejd (1703-87), founder of the sect known after him as the Wahabis, Waliullah's Islam was more comprehensive, richer and more flexible, and retained a marked Sūfi colouring In his Islam there was room not only for the *Sunnis* but also for the *Shiahs* who, quite contrary to the practice of the Wahabis, follow various Imams. But there was hardly any difference as regards the ends: "pure Islam must be re-enacted and regenerated, society must again be mighty". By this time the Indo-Muslim Society had been reduced to the lowest level, particularly in the political field, where the power had passed on to the Sikhs in the Panjāb and the British in Bengal Hindu power had revived itself in Western India The movement for Islamic regeneration expressed itself in two directions,—against internal decay and abuses in society, and resistance to, and even fight against, infidel rulers Saiyid Ahmad belonged to the latter militant group which, in pursuance of their objectives, took up arms first against the Sikhs in the Panjāb and then against the British.

The activities of the Wahabis cover the period, roughly speaking, from 1820 to 1870. But before dealing with it, it is necessary to refer to a similar movement by a sect called *Farazis* founded by Haji Shariatullah[4] of Faridpur Although confined to East Bengal and comparatively of minor importance, this movement requires a brief notice for several reasons. In the first place it was earlier, as Shariatullah began to preach his doctrine as early as 1804 Secondly, he anticipated some of the important views of the later Wahabi movement Thirdly, there are reasons to believe that *Farazis* were ultimately amalgamated with the Wahabis.

Shariatullah, who died about 1837,[5] also began with religious reforms denouncing the superstitions and corruptions which had developed in the Islamic society, but he proceeded further and declared the country under British occupation to be *dar-ul-harb* (enemy territory), where Friday and festive prayers need not be held.[6] This gave it a political character. Shariatullah was highly venerated for his piety and exemplary life, and in a short time gathered round him a band of devoted followers—disgruntled peasants who had grievances against their landlords and idle craftsmen who were thrown out of their industries. Shariatullah's greatest achieve-

ment was that "the apathetic and careless Bengali peasant was roused into enthusiasm".[7]

His son, Muhammad Mushin, better known as Dudhu Mian (1819-60),[8] was more politically minded. He devoted his time and talents to the spread of his father's doctrines and adding some new ones of his own. He had a genius for organization, and setting up his headquarters at Bahadurpur, he divided East Bengal into circles called *halqahs*, appointing a deputy or *khalifa* to each, whose "duty was to keep the sect together, make proselytes and collect contributions" for furthering the objects of the Association.[9] His main purpose was to unite the cultivators against the tyranny and illegal exactions of landlords. At that time there was also a general feeling that the real object of the *Farazis* was the expulsion of the British and the restoration of Muhammadan Power.[10] He forced Muhammadan *ryots* to join his sect on pain of excommunication from the society of the faithful; settled their disputes; administered summary justice and punished any Muhammadan, Hindu, or Christian, who, without first referring matters to him, dared bring suits for recovery of debts etc., in the *Munsif's* court.[11] He made an attack on the levying of illegal taxes by the *Zamindars*, and declared that all the lands belonged to God and no one had the right to demand any taxes. As a result of these teachings the people were being gradually prepared to accept the tenets of Saiyid Ahmad.[12] During the lifetime of Shariatullah, the sect did not come into conflict with the authorities, though he had declared the country to be *dar-ul-harb* or enemy territory.[13] The activities of Dudhu Mian,[14] however, united the *Zamindars* and indigo-planters against him. He was charged with plunder in 1838, committed to sessions for murder in 1841, tried for trespass and for unlawful assembly in 1844, and for abduction and plunder in 1846. But it was found impossible to induce witnesses to give evidence, and on each occasion he was acquitted.[15] He was, however, arrested in July 1857, after repeated complaints from the *Zamindars*, and confined in Alipore Jail as a state prisoner. He died at Bahadurpur on September 24, 1860.[16]

While Dudhu Mian was leading a movement in Faridpur and adjoining districts, Mir Nassir Ali, better known as Titu Mir or Titu Mian, of Chandpur,[17] a disciple of Saiyid Ahmad whom he had met at Mecca (1822), was preaching Wahabi doctrines at Barasat (1827). He enlisted a considerable folowing among the weavers and other lower classes in Jessore and Nadia. His reformatory zeal, however, alienated the *Hanafi* peasantry and the *Zamindars* who tried to suppress the movement. A crisis occurred in June, 1831,

when Krishna Ray, a *Zamindar*, imposed a tax of Rs. 2/8 upon each of his tenants professing to be a Wahabi, and collected it in one of his villages, Purna. A riot occurred in the adjoining village of Sarfarazpur, and the followers of Titu Mian and the *Zamindar* were involved in an open affray. Titu got erected a strong bamboo stockade around his stronghold of Narkulbaria in the Twenty-four Parganas, and collected some 500 of his followers who began *jihad*. The Wahabis marched on to Purna, murdered a Brahman priest, slaughtered two cows and sprinkled the blood on the Hindu temples, plundered the shops, insulted the Muslims who did not join their sect, and committed violent outrages on Hindu life, property and faith. They declared that the British *Raj* was over and proclaimed their "sovereign power as the hereditary right of the Muhammadans which had unjustly been usurped by the Europeans".[18] Similar activities were carried on by the Maulavis, as the followers of this sect were called, in several villages without meeting any resistance Nadia, 24 Parganas, and Faridpur practically lay at their mercy A contingent of Calcutta Militia, sent under Alexander to suppress the rebellion, was routed, the rebels under Ghulam Masum inflicting heavy casualties The manager of the Hooghly Factory was taken prisoner with his family and was released only on the condition that "he would become a *Zimmi* and sow indigo for them as rulers of India".[19] Proclamations were issued by the rebels calling on the authorities and the *Zamindars* to acknowledge their supremacy and supply them with provisions on their intended march.[20] Well-equipped troops with artillery were deputed to chastise the rebels who were found drawn out on the plain of Narkulbaria. The rebels fought bravely, but could not stand against the trained British soldiers. Titu was killed in action, and his lieutenant, Ghulam Rasul, with 350 followers, was taken prisoner Ghulam Rasul was later on sentenced to death and 140 of his comrades were condemned to various terms of imprisonment.[21]

Far more important, however, than the movement begun by Shariatullah and Titu Mian was that initiated by Saiyid Ahmad of Rai Bareilly. Saiyid Ahmad (1786-1831), the founder of the so-called 'Wahabi Movement'[22] in India, was a man of humble origin and is said to have been at one time a soldier in the service of Amir Khan, the Pindari leader who later on became ruler of Tonk. Saiyid Ahmad, as stated earlier, had come under the influence of Abdul Aziz, son and successor of the saint Waliullah[23] of Delhi, and imbibed many of his ideas. Some time about 1820 or 1821, he began to preach doctrines of religious reforms similar to those held by the sect of Wahabis in Arabia. The general belief is that he was inspired by

this Wahabi movement in Arabia where he had gone on a *haj*, but it is now held by many scholars that he evolved his doctrines independently and his movement had no connection with the Wahabis in Arabia.[24]

Saiyid Ahmad first preached his doctrines in Rohilkhand where he enlisted a considerable following. In 1820, he organized a party to perform *haj*, and on his way to Calcutta visited Patna, where he was received with great honour and respect by one of the leading Muslims of the town, Vilayet Ali, and his family. In Calcutta his reception exceeded all expectations. The masses flocked to him in such large numbers that the general procedure of initiation by personal touch had to be given up and there was a mass conversion by means of unrolling his turban, which could be touched by large numbers at a time. After his return from *haj* (1822), Saiyid Ahmad stayed at Patna, where he got so many new disciples that he thought it necessary to have a regular system of organization. So he appointed four *khalifas* or spiritual vice-regents, namely, Vilayet Ali, his brother, Inayet Ali, Shah Muhammad Husain, and Farhat Husain. Patna *khalifas* have been praised by Hunter for their high character, missionary zeal and supreme devotion to their cause. "Much of their teaching was faultless", writes Hunter, "and it has been given to them to stir up thousands of their countrymen to a purer and a truer conception of the Almighty".[25]

Saiyid Ahmad undertook tours to different districts and enrolled a large number of disciples. Gradually the movement took a political turn and Sayyid Ahmad, like his teacher Abdul Aziz, declared the country to be *dar-ul-harb* (enemy territory), thus making it incumbent on Muslims (or his followers) either to wage a *jihad* against the non Muslim rulers, or to migrate to some other Muslim country. If for some unavoidable reasons they had to live under the British rule, they should make all possible endeavours to overthrow it. Saiyid Ahmad seemed to have fully realized that the British 'traders' constituted the main threat to India's independence, and an all-out effort is needed to drive them out. In his letter to Raja Hindu Rai (a Maratha chief), Saiyid Ahmad sought the help of the Native States in his endeavour, as he said, "to clear the unfriendly foreigners of a distant land who have become masters of the country" out of India.[26] A number of pamphlets were written urging upon the members of the sect to unite as one body and carry on a crusade against the 'infidels' for the conquest of India. For this purpose, Saiyid Ahmad made efforts to train his followers in the use of arms, and himself, in a soldier's kit, held military parades. In pursuance of his doctrine of *hijrat*, and far more due to political

exigencies, he proceeded to the North-West Frontier Province and Afghanistan, accompanied by the Patna Maulavis, to enlist the support of the tribes in his holy war against the Sikhs (21 December, 1826). In his pamphlet *Targhib-ul-Jihad*[27] (Incitement to Religious War), he called the Sikh rulers 'oppressors' who had killed thousands of Muslims and "do not allow the call to prayer from mosques and the killing of cows".

Saiyid Ahmad did not meet with much success against the Sikhs, though he was able to capture Peshawar for a while (1830) and struck coins in his own name,—"Ahmad, the Just, Defender of the Faith". Soon dissensions broke out between his Hindustani and Pathan followers who rose against the former and killed them in large numbers. Peshawar was recaptured by the Sikhs, and Saiyid Ahmad himself was killed in a battle at Balakot in 1831.

In the meantime the views of the sect spread very rapidly. While Vilayet Ali and Inayet Ali preached in Kabul and Frontier provinces, Shah Muhammad put the organization on a sound footing in Bengal and Bihar, where he opened a number of branches at Raj Mahal, Rajshahi, Malda, Nadia, Barasat, Dacca, and other important places. Vilayet Ali was later on deputed to Hyderabad (Deccan), Central Provinces, and Bombay. He could not make much headway among the mixed population of Bombay which was influenced by European civilization and ideas, but in Hyderabad he was able to recruit a number of followers including a brother of the ruler of Hyderabad, Nawab Mubariz-ud-Daulah. The Nawab was later on apprehended for anti-State activities. He was tried by a Commission which sat from June 1839, to March, 1840. The Commission held that Mubariz-ud-Daulah had collected a large number of armed Wahabis, tried to correspond with the Nawabs of Tonk and Rampur and other chiefs, and actually carried on a "treasonable correspondence with the Nawab of Kurnool", for taking possession of the kingdom of Hyderabad and waging a war against the British. He was confined in Golconda fort where he died in 1854.[28] Ten of his principal associates were also confined in prison for more than ten years.

The death of Saiyid Ahmad was a great blow to the movement, but it must be said to the credit of the Patna *khalifas* that they not only kept it alive but made it even more vigorous in a few years' time. This was mainly due to the wonderful organization evolved by the Wahabis in India which will be described later on. To remove the immediate danger of despondency among the followers, Vilayet Ali gave out that Saiyid Ahmad was not killed, but had only dis-

appeared, and would appear again at the proper time to lead the army of the 'faithful' to victory.

Maulvi Qasim, one of the Wahabi *khalifas*, was away on an expedition to Muzaffarabad (in Kashmir) at the time of the battle of Balakot. On hearing of Saiyid Ahmad's defeat and death, he took refuge with the remnants of Saiyid Ahmad's family at Sittana, a mountain tract belonging to an intimate friend of the Wahabi apostle, Saiyid Akbar. Later on they shifted to a safer place, Takhtaband in Bonair.[29] The Wahabi *khalifas* in India now selected Maulavi Nasir-ud-din[30] as Commander-in-Chief, who was to march through Tonk and Sindh and join the Wahabis at Bonair. Nasir-ud-din, however, remained at Shikarpur (in Sindh) where many recruits from Hindusthan, especially from Bengal, joined him. Nasir-ud-din, along with Qasim Khan who had joined him, pushed forward and assisted the ruler of Kabul, Dost Muhammad, in his fight against the British. Qasim returned to the hills after the failure of the movement and preached as a *khalifa* of Saiyid Ahmad, declaring that the Imam had re-appeared. He took up his abode at Kawai in Kagan, the chiefs of which place, Zamin Shah and Naubat Shah, had become his disciples.[31] His appeals for help met with ready response from the Patna Maulavis, and men and money poured into the hills. Zain-ul-Abadin[32] of Hyderabad, a disciple of Vilayet Ali, who had brought in many recruits from Tippera and Sylhet, led another expedition against the Sikhs, but was defeated. The internecine troubles which arose among the Sikhs after the death of Ranjit Singh gave an opportunity to the Wahabis, who were able to gain control over a large extent of territory along the left bank of the Sindhu, stretching from Haripur to Kagan, and from Sittana to Kashmir.[33] These conquests were, however, shortlived. After the establishment of the British authority in the Panjāb in 1847, the Wahabi leaders and their troops surrendered to the British at Haripur. Aulad Ali escaped to Sittana, while Vilayet Ali and Inayet Ali were sent to Patna under escort where they were bound down not to move out of the town for four years.[34] Vilayet Ali did not take it seriously and entered into 'treasonable' correspondence with Aulad Ali at Sittana. Inayet Ali renewed his activities (1850) and enrolled a large number of volunteers at Rajshahi. He was again bound down by the Magistrate of Patna, but fled away to Sittana where he took over the command of the Wahabis. In September, 1849, Vilayet Ali marched towards Sittana, preaching *jihad* in every large town he visited. He stayed in Delhi for about two months[35] and is said to have preached the Wahabi doctrines before the Mughul Emperor, Bahadur Shah, who approved of it.[36] By stages he reached Khanna,

from where he was escorted by Inayet Ali to Sittana.[37] With the arrival of Vilayet Ali, a conflict arose between the two brothers over the mode of war for the attainment of their objective. While Inayet Ali stood for total war with the British, Vilayet Ali, who possessed better political wisdom, thought their present resources to be insufficient and desired to properly organize the movement and their resources before undertaking such a venture.[38] Vilayet Ali's view prevailed and he took over the command from his brother who retired to Mangal Thana.[39] Vilayet Ali, however, died soon after (1852), and Inayet Ali became the undisputed leader. He made vigorous preparations to carry out his long-cherished design of waging war against the British. Circular letters were addressed to the Wahabi *khalifas* to incite people to proceed to Mulka Sittana for *jihad*. *Hijrat* was declared to be incumbent on every Muslim in an infidel country like India.[40] Those persons who were not in a position to join in the holy war "were recommended to resist passively and refrain from all intercourse with their *kafir* rulers, to form as it were a power within the Government and totally opposed to it"[41]

The preachers became active, particularly in Meerut, Bareilly, Delhi and in many districts of Bengal and Bihar.[42] Rebellion was openly preached in Patna, where one of the leaders, Ahmadullah, had assembled 700 armed persons and was prepared to resist any investigations by the Magistrate. The police was also said to be in league with the rebels.[43] Sedition was preached among the native troops also. An attempt to tamper with the Frontier Infantry stationed at Rawalpindi was brought to the notice of the authorities. On May 12, 1853, Muhammad Wali, Regimental Munshi, and others were tried at Rawalpindi for offences against the State and convicted.[44] The seizure of certain papers made it clear that a well-thought-out plan for transporting men from Bengal to Sittana for purposes of *jihad* was in operation Lord Dalhousie recorded two minutes on the subject, and orders were issued for close watch on the activities of the Wahabis.

Inayet Ali, meanwhile, had been able to enlist the sympathy of Akhund of Swat and Saiyids of Sittana to his cause and made a spirited attack on the pro-British ruler of Amb, Jahandad Khan, who feigned submission but secretly applied for British help. In the encounter with the British (1853),[45] the Wahabis suffered heavy casualties, their rear guard and its leader Karam Ali being cut to pieces. Inayet Ali escaped with great difficulty and henceforward adopted the policy of his brother to make suitable preparations before risking a fight with the trained British soldiers.[46] Regular military training was imparted to the recruits, and songs were re-

cited extolling the glories of *jihad*. An expedition under Mirza Muhammad was successful in capturing the Yusufzai villages of Nawakela and Sheikhjana, but it was soon repulsed by the British forces. Inayet Ali next occupied Naringi, a border village within the British territory, but had to retreat under pressure to Chinghai and Bagh.[47] Inayet Ali, with the help of frontier tribesmen, next made a night attack (October, 1857) on Lt. Horne, the Assistant Commissioner at Sheikhjana.[48] The British camp was routed, and the party returned triumphantly with a large amount of booty which was distributed among the soldiers. While Inayet Ali was preparing for another campaign, the rising of 1857 broke out in full fury, and his communication with, and the source of supply from, Patna were cut off. He moved from Chinghai to Swat where he fell ill and died in March 1858.[49] He was succeeded by Maqsud Ali, a Bihari, who took charge of the Sittana camp.

The Wahabis did not play a conspicuous role in the rising of 1857 due to a variety of reasons. Their leaders such as Muhammad Husain and Ahmadullah had been put behind bars, communications with Sittana were cut off due to disturbed state of affairs, and forts across the Sindhu were zealously guarded, making it impossible to have any communication with their centre at Patna. The Wahabis had also a feeling that these disturbances were "a matter consern-ing the sepoys" only. But this does not mean that they had reconciled themselves to the British; in fact they were "the first to spread, if not to originate, the idea of greased cartridges amongst the sepoys at Barrackpore", and according to Reily, District Superintendent of Police on Special Duty,[50] "the story had its origin in the Misre Ganj Masjid at Calcutta".[51] Some sporadic risings at Patna, Hyderabad and Agra are also atributed to the Wahabis.[52] Tayler, the Commissioner of Patna, invited the Wahabi leaders, Ahmadullah and Muhammad Husain, with some other local citizens, for consultation and then treacherously put the Wahabi leaders under arrest.[53] The local Wahabis organized an armed rebellion but it was suppressed with the aid of the military.[54] At Hyderabad, the Wahabi leaders, Turrabaz Khan and Alauddin, led an attack against the British Residency but were defeated. Turrabaz Khan was shot dead while Alauddin was deported to the Andamans. Dr. Vazir Khan, supposed to be a Wahabi, was at the head of rebels who besieged the British garrison at Agra Fort. At the trial of Bahadur Shah, General Bakht Khan, the leader of the mutineers at Delhi, was also described as a Wahabi, and it was stated that the Wahabis came to the capital in large numbers from Jaipur, Bhopal, Hansi, and Hissar to join the mutineers.[55]

Sittana camp was a source of chronic anxiety to the British. From 1850 to 1857, the British Government sent no less than 16 expeditions to destroy the rebels and their allies, but with no great success.[56] An expedition had to be sent under Sir Sydney Cotton with 5,000 men in 1858 to chastise the rebels, and the Sittana lands were made over to the mountain tribes on condition that they would not allow the 'fanatics' to pass through their territory to commit depredations within the British frontier. Maqsud Ali died in 1861, and Abdullah, son of Vilayet Ali, succeeded him as leader of the Wahabis at Sittana. Abdullah vigorously pursued the anti-British campaign, urging the Muhammadans to leave the country and join the forces of Islam for the conquest of India.[57] Ahmadullah, who managed the affairs in India, sent up a large number of recruits and money through the various agencies, which will be narrated in the section on Organization Several tribes as well as the Akhund of Swat, who governed a population of one lakh, made a common cause with the Wahabis, who recovered their old settlement of Sittana in July, 1863[58] The Panjāb Government in a note recorded its views that "these fanatics were no harmless or powerless religionists; that they are a permanent source of danger to our rule in India"[59] The British Government sent several expeditions to crush the rebels, the most important of which was under the command of Sir Neville Chamberlain (October, 1863) The British army advanced into the Ambeyla Pass but could not make headway to the Chumla Valley due to the stubborn resistance offered by the Wahabis and their allies. All British efforts to dislodge the rebels from their positions failed, and they were repulsed with heavy casualties[60] The Wahabis even captured a picket and drove the British force back with a loss of 114 men, besides officers killed and wounded.[61] Subsequently, the Wahabis took another British picket which could only be retaken after a severe battle in which the British General was wounded The situation became desperate for the British, and Chamberlain sent down a telegram asking for "as many troops as could be spared" At this stage General Garvock took over the command and pushed forward at the head of 9,000 troops;[62] he defeated the rebels near Laloo and again at the foot of the Bonair hills The confederacy of the tribes was broken through diplomatic tactics, and it facilitated British advance to the rebel village of Mulka, 35 miles from Sittana, which was burnt down. According to Muslim chronicles, only two houses were actually burnt.[63]

The British Government now tried to strike at the root of the movement which was being continuously fed by men and money from Hindusthan. Certain correspondence came into the possession

of the authorities which revealed that regular agencies had been set up in India for the purpose. The names of certain persons and *aliases* also figured in these letters. The discovery of these facts led to the State trial at Ambala in which 11 persons were charged for attempting to wage war against the Queen and aiding and abetting that war. Plowden, a well-known lawyer, appeared on behalf of the accused, while Capt. Parson represented the prosecution. On 2 May, 1864, Sir Herbert Edwardes, Sessions Judge, sentenced Muhammad Shafi, Muhammad Jafar and Yahya Ali to death, while the remaining eight, Abdul Ghafar, Abdul Karim, Husaini of Thaneshwar, Abdul Rahim, Illahi Bakhsh, Mian Jan, Husaini of Azimabad and Abdul Ghafur were to be transported for life with forfeiture of their property.[64] The premises of the Wahabis at Sadiqpura was to be levelled and handed over to the municipality for a market place, as also the forfeited property, but the orders could not be carried out due to the appearance of other claimants.[65]

Roberts, the Judicial Commissioner, who heard the appeal, reduced the sentence of death passed on Yahya Ali, Jafar and Shafi to that of transportation for life, as it might "be less palatable (to the accused) than death on the scaffold".[66] Illahi Bakhsh turned an approver in the second trial at Patna in 1865, and was subsequently released.

The evidence recorded in the Ambala trial of 1864 rendered necessary the Patna trial of 1865. The Government now proceeded against Yahya Ali's brother, Ahmadullah, who was Deputy Collector at Patna.

Ahmadullah was the General Manager of the *kafilah* (headquarters of the movement at Sadiqpura) and a central figure of the movement at Patna. It was proved against him that he collected money for the 'fanatics', attended meetings where treason was preached and Bengali rebel recruits for Sittana were present, and corresponded with his relations at Sittana. Ainslie, the Sessions Judge, sentenced him to death but, on appeal, the High Court commuted it to transportation for life with forfeiture of property.[67] The *zamindari* estate of Ahmadullah, having an annual income of Rs. 20,000, as well as the villages granted in perpetual lease to his wife, were confiscated. In appreciation of the services rendered by Muhammad Shafi and Abdul Karim, accused in the Ambala case, their sentences for the rest of the period were remitted.[68]

These trials did not put an end to the activities of the Wahabis, who seemed to have continued their exertions unabated. Maulavi Mubarak Ali, who succeeded Ahmadullah at Patna, introduced new code terms as the old ones were now intelligible to the British.

Firuz Shah, a prince of the Delhi royal family, was said to have joined the rebels at Sittana in 1868 and issued letters to the Deccan Rajas to help them with men and money.[69] A coalition of the hill tribes was again attempted in 1868, and a British outpost in the Agror Valley was attacked. A fruitless little campaign followed, in which large numbers of British troops were employed to keep the 'rebels' away from the borders. In summing up the results of the campaign, the Panjāb Government recorded with regret that it had "come to a close without our having been able either to drive out the Hindustani fanatics or to induce them to surrender and to return to their homes in Hindustan".[70]

The rebels remained a source of constant anxiety to the British as it was feared that "should a war between Great Britain and Russia or Afghanistan break out, the rebel colony on the border will be worth to the enemy many thousands of men".[71] The British Government was now resolved to crush the movement once for all. The investigations of Reily, Deputy-Inspector-General of Police, Bengal, clearly established that (1) there existed a very serious and wide-spread conspiracy, with its headquarters at Patna, for the purpose of carrying on war with the English; (2) it had its origin with the colony at Sittana; (3) this colony was mainly dependent on the supplies which were collected in India as a result of this agitation; and (4) these supplies could only be checked if the leaders in India were apprehended and put behind bars.

Vigorous measures were adopted by the Government of India to apprehend the seditious preachers, and every method was employed to gather some sort of evidence against these so-called traitors. The facts disclosed in the State trials of 1864 and 1865 led to the Malda trial of September, 1870 and Rajmahal trial of October, 1870. Maulavi Amiruddin, son of the great Wahabi leader of Malda, Rafiq Mandal, whose devotion and zeal for the movement had become proverbial, was arrested and tried at Malda for his anti-State activities and sentenced to transportation for life with forfeiture of property.[72] With the old spirit still warm within him, Rafiq embraced his son when the judgement was pronounced, and cried out: "My son, never forsake *Ameen ruffadair*, keep firm to the faith". He was prepared to lose his son if he remained firm in the new doctrines.[73]

Ibrahim Mandal of Islampore was involved in the Rajmahal trial and sentenced to transportation for life. He was the leader of the movement in the districts of Malda, Rajshahi, Bogra, Rangpore, Dinajpore, etc., and collected large sums for the *jihad*. He was so much respected in those parts for his piety and upright character

that the Government prosecutor, Kinealy, found it very difficult to procure witnesses to testify to his so-called "seditious acts".[74] He is said to have been relased in 1878 on the order of Lord Lytton, and died in the first decade of the present century.[75]

Further investigations led to the arrest and detention of Amir Khan and Hashmat Dad Khan (July, 1869), hide-merchants of Colootollah, Calcutta, who were said to have been engaged in collecting money and forwarding remittances to Sittana through their agent Pir Muhammad. The other accused in the case were Mubarak Ali, Din Muhammad, Amir-ud-din, and Tobaruk Ali.[76]

An application for the transfer of the case from Patna to Calcutta was turned down by the High Court, due to the strong opposition of the Advocate-General. As the *Englishman* wrote: "The case had almost become a personal one and the official opinion was that the Government, to save itself from a very great difficulty, must get a conviction and this might have become impossible in Calcutta". The trial lasted 6 months (March 1871—August 1871) and about 136 witnesses were examined.[77] The large mass of evidence referred to letters and telegrams and to money paid and received for seditious purposes. Amir Khan seemed to have been quite liberal in granting sums for the movement, though it was found difficult to connect him directly with the *jihad*.[78]

Hashmat Dad Khan and Pir Muhammad were acquitted by the Sessions Judge as the evidence was not sufficient to warrant conviction, and the remaining five were sentenced to life imprisonment. Their appeal for release, as previously for bail, was rejected by Justice Norman, Officiating Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court. The seventy-five year old Amir Khan was, however, not transported, but kept in prison[79] in India and died a few months after he was set free in 1879. Routledge, who travelled in India from 1870 to 1874, censured Lord Mayo for his conduct in this case and observed: "The long imprisonment without trial, the re-arrest at Alipore, and the removal from the jurisdiction of the highest Court of law to the Court of a civilian Judge, able and respected though he was as an officer, did not give an idea of the impartial dignity of the law which is one of the best claims of England to be supreme in India".[80]

Justice Norman, mentioned above, who had also heard the appeal in the Patna trial, was mortally wounded by a Muhammadan, Abdullah (20th September, 1871), in the court-premises in Calcutta. Abdullah was supposed by some to have been connected with the Wahabis, but a careful inquiry failed to show any grounds for such suspicion, and he died on the scaffold, without giving

any clue to his motives.[81] Four months later, in February, 1872, the Viceroy, Lord Mayo, was fatally stabbed at Port Blair, the capital of the Penal Settlement at the Andamans, by an Afghan, Sher Ali, who was under sentence of transportation for life for committing murder. As in the case of Chief Justice Norman, the motive of the murder remained a mystery, and it was, as before, found impossible to trace any connection between Sher Ali and the Wahabi leaders in India.[82] Sher Ali, however, claimed to have been a martyr to the cause of Indian Muslims.[83]

As a result of these trials and other vigorous measures, the Wahabi conspiracy was gradually stamped out from India. As a consequence thereof, the militant Wahabi movement in the north-western hills almost came to an end, as it was deprived of those resources which had maintained it. The Akhund of Swat, in accordance with his understanding with the British, drove out the 'Hindustani fanatics' from their settlement at Bonair, and they had to found new colonies at Palaoi and Maidan.[84] Their role in the later expeditions of 1865, 1888 and 1898 was not a very important one; but they readily supported the hill tribes in their encounters with the British, and many of them died on the battlefield.[85] Later on, the frontier tribes probably drove them out of these colonies also, for there is a reference to their having settled at Tilwai, a village granted to them by the tribe of the Mubarak Khils.[86]

2. *Organization*

The Wahabi movement was much better planned, organized and knitted than the rising of 1857. The absolute secrecy with which its activities were carried out and the fidelity of its members to one another were remarkable. Saiyid Ahmad, the founder, had appointed four *khalifas* or spiritual vice-regents, namely, Vilayet Ali, Inayet Ali, Muhammad Husain, and Farhat Husain,[87] to enrol followers in his name and to gather supplies for the proposed *jihad*. With a missionary zeal, the *khalifas* toured the length and breadth of the country to stir up the people against the English 'infidels', appointing provincial and district agents in the far-flung corners of the country. After the abrupt end of Saiyid Ahmad in 1831, Patna became the centre of the movement. Yahya Ali was the chief priest at Patna (nominated at his death-bed by Shah Muhammad Husain who was appointed by Saiyid Ahmad). A Central Committee with Ahmadullah as President and General Manager was in charge of the over-all operations. Its members were Yahya Ali, Abdul Rahim, Abdul Ghafur, and Illahi Bakhsh. It used to meet every Friday night after prayers, and discussed all matters concerning the *jihad*

and the maintenance of Sittana camp.[88] Letters were read out and instructions issued. Everyone of the "friendly" districts had similar committees and permanent preachers. Their zeal was intensified from time to time by the visits of itinerant missionaries whose influence was consolidated by the central propaganda at Patna. Among district preachers the names of Mian Jan, Muhammad Ibrahim (Lower Bengal), Yahya Ali, Abdul Rahim, Illahi Bakhsh (Patna), Muhammad Jafar, Husain, Muhammad Shafi (Thaneshwar and Ambala), Abdulla, Faiz Ali and Muhammad Ahsan (Sittana) deserve special mention. Substitutes, too, had been nominated to take up the work in case of their arrest, death or any other emergency. Sadiqpura (the headquarters of the Patna *khalifas*) was like a caravanserai where the district missionaries sent up young men for onward transmission to Sittana after giving them necessary training. The more promising ones were selected for a longer course of instructions and, after a thorough training, were sent back to work as missionaries in their own provinces.[89]

The transmission of the recruits from Patna, called *'Chhota Godown'*, to *'Bara Godown'* (Sittana) beyond the frontier, a distance of about 2,000 miles, presented a most difficult problem to the organizers, and here Yahya Ali's genius for administration showed itself at its best. He organized a series of rest-houses at regular intervals, where these recruits, on their way to Sittana, were received by friends who looked towards their safety and comfort. In charge of these way-side rest-houses were trustworthy men of various walks of life,—all devoted to the supreme cause of the overthrow of the British rule—, and the President of the local committee of 'conspirators'. A list had been prepared of these stages and the mosques where the recruits could safely put up, and also of the names of persons who were sympathetic towards the movement; the fresh recruits were required to learn this list by heart before leaving Patna. Regular agencies had been set up at Patna, Banaras, Kanpur, Delhi, Thaneshwar, Ambala, Amritsar, Jhelum, Rawalpindi, Attock and Peshawar.

At Sittana, these youngmen were kept under the immediate tuition of the leader, Abdullah, who instructed them personally.[90] A few of them were selected as most trustworthy and sent to the plains to work as agents at different stations within the British territory. These agents invariably followed some vocations, such as those of tailors, book-sellers, book-binders, *mullahs*, butchers, etc., to deceive the police. The rest of these young men were drilled daily, sometimes twice a day, reciting songs extolling the glories of the

war with the 'infidel' English.[91] They were formed into *jamiats* of 130 men each, commanded by a *jamadar*.[92]

Besides the Central Office at Patna, the Wahabis had a permanent machinery throughout the rural districts of Bengal for spreading their faith. Hunter could not help admiring these missionaries who were "the most spiritual and least selfish of the sect". These preachers usually attached themselves to the mosques to be in a position to train and educate the rising generation, imbibing them with their ideas. The earlier *khalifas* favoured the efforts of their missionaries to make a permanent settlement wherever the multitude of these converts encouraged them to do so. So a number of these settlements grew up in rural Bengal, as for example, Islampur.[93] These district centres kept up a regular correspondence with the headquarters at Patna and each had its own machinery for raising money and recruits, complete within itself.

The local chief, usually a man of piety and some influence, preached rebellion with great force, accustomed the people to a regular system of contributions for the holy war, and forwarded yearly supplies of men and money to Patna for transmission to the Frontier Camp. Besides the usual Muhammadan levy of *zakat*, the Wahabis imposed on their followers other taxes, viz., *Ushr*, or a tax of one *seer* per *maund* on all produce; *Mutthia*, or a handful of rice put aside for each member of the family at every meal, and deposited every Friday with the *Mullah* or custodian of the village mosque who sold the rice thus collected, sale proceeds being given for the war fund; *Fitra*, or the voluntary alms given for deserving persons at the mosques; *Qurbani ka Chamra*, or sale proceeds of hides of beasts killed during *Bakr Id*. Later, an extraordinary tax was devised, to be realized at intervals as a voluntary donation over and above the regular taxes.[94] Another source of income was the property of the Wahabis dying without heirs.[95]

The conversion of a *mandal* (village headman) afforded a ready-made establishment for the collection of taxes; otherwise villages were grouped together into fiscal clusters, and to each cluster a chief tax-collector was appointed. This officer on his part appointed a village collector to every hamlet, checked his collections and transmitted the proceeds to the District Centre. As a rule, each village had one tax-gatherer, but in populous villages a larger staff was employed consisting of the *'Din ka Sardar'*, or the Priest, who led the prayers and gathered the contributions, *'Duniya ka Sardar'*, or the General Manager, who looked after the worldly affairs of the sect, and *'Dak ka Sardar'*, or an officer who supplied messengers for secret letters and for transmitting the money collected.[96]

Rafiq Mandal, in Bengal, was the first man to organize a system for collecting the above taxes. His jurisdiction extended over the whole of Malda with parts of the districts of Murshidabad and Rajshahi, and he received a fourth of the collections as salary. After devoting a part of his collections, which usually exceeded Rs. 20,000 a year, for the support of those gone to the Frontier, and the requirements of the new recruits, he would send the remainder to Patna. Money was sent to the Frontier twice or thrice a year, but not regularly; it depended on the requirements and partly on the amount collected.[97]

The mode of remittances was partly by *hundies* (arranged by Abdul Ghafur with Illahi Bakhsh who produced drafts on Delhi and Ambala) and partly in gold *mohurs* which were sent through private messengers.[98] The supplies of men and money were thus forwarded through agents at each stage from Lower Bengal to Patna, and then by rail to Delhi and Ambala; thenceforward through Maula Baksh (Shafi's servant) in Lahore, Abdul Karim, Nabi Baksh and Shafi's agents at Rawalpindi, and Ahmad Ali at Peshawar, to Sittana, a distance of not less than 2,000 miles.[99] A well-worked system of *aliases* and secret language[100] was another factor contributing to the success and duration of this movement. Abdul Ghani's visit to Port Blair to meet the transported Wahabi leaders, Ahmadullah and Yahya Ali, and his safe return may well speak for the wonderful organization and planning of this movement.[101]

3. *Character of the Movement*

The Wahabi movement, in its early days, was a purely religious one, confined to a section of the Muslim community, particularly the lower middle class.[102] But as a religious creed it did not attract much following, especially after the death of its founder Saiyid Ahmad, and might not have long survived it but for the political character it assumed in the meanwhile. "It is in districts like Maldah and Backergunge", wrote Reily, District Superintendent of Police on Special Duty, "where the Muhammadan ryots are rich that they find time to indulge in fanaticism and here the movement also assumes a political aspect".[103] It was primarily due to its political role that the movement enlisted the sympathies and even the active support of the general Muhammadan populace. A perusal of the various State trials would be quite revealing in this respect. Among the convicted persons we find representatives of every rank of Muhammadan society,—priests of the highest class, wealthy merchants, soldiers, preachers, and persons belonging to the lower strata of society, viz.,butchers, scriveners, peasants, etc. It was mainly due

to this general sympathetic attitude of the entire community[104] towards the political aspirations of the Wahabis, that it became difficult for the British authorities to unearth the conspiracy and to find witnesses to depose against most of these workers who, to quote Reily again, were so popular and held in such great esteem that "men were unwilling to testify to any of the seditious acts".[105] The few who betrayed were silently, yet completely, boycotted by their community. Abdullah, an agent of Hashmat Dad Khan, for instance, could only be induced to give evidence if he were offered some job, as otherwise he was sure to "lose his present employment and would not be trusted by any other native and consequently he would come to grief and his family would be ruined for want of food". So was the case with the Patna *Hakim*, Ahmad Ali, whose help to the police in investigations cost him his lucrative practice and he had to beg the Government to employ him as a Sub-Inspector of Police to save himself from starvation.[106] Such was the popularity of the leaders of the movement that in spite of its best endeavours, persuasions and intimidations, the Government found it impossible to sell the property of the convicted persons. The Police Officer, Kinealy, lamented in his report that "with great difficulty certain perishable articles of personal property...could only be disposed of at very inadequate prices".[107]

The Hindus, in general, it is true, were suspicious about the motives and character of the movement which in its early stages was directed against the Sikh rulers and proclaimed religious *jihads*. The forceful Wahabi denunciation of accretions to Islam, which were practically all borrowings from Hinduism, was another cause of possible annoyance And as Smith writes: "It did encourage communal attitudes, especially in religious thinking, and left a considerable section of the Muslim masses more susceptible to later communalist propaganda than they might otherwise have been".[108] But, in spite of it, after the extinction of the Sikh State, when the Wahabi movement became increasingly political and was turned against the British rulers, the Hindus felt some sympathy for it, and there are in the records references to the detention of some Hindus for their pro-Wahabi activities.[109] It may be said to the credit of the organizers of this movement, which aimed at the destruction of British power in India and the establishment of an Islamic State, that they never came into conflict with the Hindus.

The movement assumed the character of a class struggle in some places, especially in Bengal, where it was accompanied by furious risings of peasants against their landlords, irrespective of communal distinctions.[110] And as Hunter wrote, "the presence of Wa-

habis in a district is a standing menace to all classes...possessed of property or vested interests".[111] The well-to-do Muslims, and every *mullah* or priest of a shrine, with a few acres of land attached to it, decried the Wahabi agitation and issued *fatwas* against it.

The Wahabi movement was not confined to Bengal, Bihar, Panjāb, N.W.F.P. and Madras. In the Deccan, too, the people were stirred to such a pitch of enthusiasm that the women are said to have sold their jewels and devoted the proceeds to support the movement.[112]

*In spite of its wide-spread character and the great enthusiasm it evoked, the Wahabi movement cannot be regarded as a national movement. It was a movement of the Muslims by the Muslims, and for the Muslims. The Hindus, as a class, held severely aloof, though a few individuals, here and there, might have felt some sort of passive, or occasionally even active, sympathy for it. Their number was, however, very insignificant, and not a single Hindu figured prominently in this great movement extending over a considerable part of India for nearly half a century. The Wahabis were undoubtedly inspired by the motive of freeing India of the British rule, but their struggle was not for securing freedom for India but for the re-establishment of Muslim supremacy. The history of the Wahabi movement, as noted above,[113] clearly proves that even the most wide-spread and well-organized movement for driving away the British, need not always be taken as a national war of independence.[114]

B. THE KUKA REVOLT IN THE PUNJAB[114a]

The Kuka movement in the Punjab shows a striking resemblance with that of the Wahabis. Both began as an attempt to restore the pristine purity of religion,—Sikhism in the first case, and Islam in the second,—and both drifted to a political movement with the common object of driving away the English. The methods of organization were also very similar.

The Kuka movement was probably founded in the Western Punjab by Bhagat Jawhar Mal, generally known as Sian Sahib, in the forties of the nineteenth century, shortly before the British conquest of the Punjab.[114ab] Its aim was to purify the Sikh religion by removing the abuses and superstitions that had crept into it, such as caste distinctions, rigours imposed upon widows like those among the Hindus, and the worship of idols, tombs, and ascetics. Sian Sahib and his disciple, Balak Singh, gathered round them a band of followers and fixed their headquarters at Hazro in NWFP. They "proclaimed Govind Singh as the only true Guru, who prohibited all worship

save the reading of his 'Granth' and all employment of Brahmans, and in many ways revived the original doctrines of the Sikh faith. Their tenets included the abolition of caste and of restrictions upon intermarriage, abstinence from meat, liquors and drugs, and comparatively free intercourse between the sexes. The sectaries carried staves about in their hand, tied their turbans in a peculiar fashion (*sidhpdg*), wore a necklace of woollen cord tied in knots, and had a watchword known only to themselves."

After the conquest of the Punjab by the British, the revival of the Sikh sovereignty is said to have become the chief item in the programme of the Kukas. Their ideas of reform receded into the background, and, according to some accounts, they degenerated into moral laxity. Ram Singh, who became the leader of the sect after the death of Balak Singh in 1863, had served in the army of the Sikh ruler, Nao Nihal Singh. He rapidly recruited a large number of followers, chiefly from the Jats and many lower classes, and emphasized the political aspect of the sect. He "declared himself to be an incarnation of Guru Govind Singh, and preached the revival of the Khalsa and the overthrow of the English Government." He is said to have asked his followers not to accept service under the Government, not to send children to Government schools, not to use courts of law but settle disputes in *panchayats*, not to use foreign goods, and not to use Government postal service. Ram Singh is said to have openly declared that when one hundred and twenty-five thousand Sikhs joined him, the English would be defeated and fly from the country, and the Kukas would rule over the whole country from Ghazni to Calcutta. In these circumstances "it is not possible for a Kuka to be a loyal subject of the British Government, as the avowed object of Guru Govind Singh, whose incarnation Ram Singh professes to be, was a temporal kingdom; and the establishment of this under Ram Singh is the first element in the faith of the sect".[114ac] Ram Singh settled down at Bhaini Ala, 14 miles east of Ludhiana, and used to go about followed by a large retinue and in great state. He gave military training to his followers and appointed 'Subas' and 'Naib-Subas' to organize the sect in different districts of the Punjab. But immorality seems to have crept into the organization. Mr. Ibbetson refers to the nocturnal meetings of the Kukas marked by a great deal of sexual license, and observes: "The pure morality which they at first preached has been superseded by the most unbridled license under the name of religious enthusiasm, men and women dancing naked together and indulging in orgies which have alienated the sympathies of the more decent portion of the community".

The Kuka movement, particularly its political implication, had been causing anxiety to the Government since 1863, and they looked upon it as a source of great danger. It was reported that Ram Singh had been carrying on secret intrigues with the Maharaja of Nepal, and that a Kuka regiment was organized in Jammu in 1870 with the help of the Maharaja. The Kukas were believed to have preached their doctrines among the native forces, and also to have enlisted themselves in the forces of native princes. But the truth of all these cannot be established with certainty. In any case the Government kept a sharp eye on the movement and special precautions were taken from time to time to prevent large gatherings of them.

The two main outward activities of the Kukas before 1871 were the destruction of idols and shrines in various localities of the Punjab, and the murder of butchers and others whom they suspected of slaughtering kine. When the British first conquered the Punjab they promised to enforce Sikh *Darbar's* prohibition of cow-slaughter. This was not, however, followed in practice, and ere long beef was openly sold in markets. To stop the work of the butchers became a principal tenet of the Kukas and organized plan to murder the butchers brought them into conflict with the authorities.

The establishment of a public slaughter-house near one of the gates of the golden temple of Amritsar and throwing bones into a Hindu well provoked the Kukas, who murdered four butchers and wounded three others. In course of a raid at Raikot in Ludhiana District, the Kukas killed three and wounded thirteen. It is generally believed that Ram Singh, the leader, had no hand in these crimes, and his followers murdered the butchers of kine simply because they believed they were earning spiritual merit thereby. So, although nine Kukas were executed and two transported for these crimes, no legal action was taken against Ram Singh.

These punishments provoked the Kukas to greater frenzy. "On the 13th January, 1872, there was a meeting of the Kukas at Bhaini, and a band of about 150 of these, after working themselves up into a state of religious frenzy, started off under the leadership of two Jats of Sakarundi in Patiala territory. Ram Singh (who disapproved of this action) informed the police of their intention to do some mischief, saying that he had no control over them. They were armed with axes, sticks etc., only and are said to have declared that the town of Maler Kotla would be the object of their attack. They went to Pael in Patiala territory without causing any disturbance, and re-appeared next day near to Malaudh, the seat of Sirdar Badan Singh, on which they made a sudden onset with the idea, probably,

of getting arms and money. They are said to have wanted the Sirdar to lead them. In this attack two men were killed on each side and a few wounded, and the Kukas succeeded in securing three horses, one gun and one sword. No one joined them anywhere on their march, and they never numbered more than 150 men at the outside. They next proceeded to Kotla (the capital of the small Malar Kotla State) which is nine miles distant from Malaudh, and on the morning of the 15th made a sudden attack on the palace and the treasury of the Nawab; but they were driven off when the Kotla guards had recovered from their surprise, and pursued to Rurr in the Patiala territory, where, to the number of 68, they surrendered to the Patiala authorities. At Malaudh and Kotla they had killed 10 men and wounded 17, while their own loss had been 9 killed and 38 wounded. On getting news of the attacks on Malaudh and Kotla, Mr. Cowan, the Deputy Commissioner of Ludhiana, started for the latter place" and ordered the sixty-eight prisoners, of whom 29 were wounded, to be sent there. How, in defiance of the order of the Commissioner, and without even the semblance of a trial, Cowan executed 49 of the captured men by blowing them from guns has been narrated at some length in Chapter XLVII; others were tried by the Commissioner and executed on the following day.

Ram Singh was always kept under surveillance by the Government. Although no legal action was taken against him for the murder of butchers, he and some of his chief followers were interned within their villages, and a body of police was posted at Bhaini. His restrictions were partially removed in 1866, but Ram Singh was held responsible for the outrage of 1872, though he had disowned the band of his followers who attacked Malaudh and Kotla, and kept the police informed of their activities. He was deported to Rangoon and remained a State prisoner till his death in 1885.

Thus ended the Kuka movement. There is hardly any doubt that the rash action of a small group of fanatics among the Kukas, undertaken in direct defiance of their leader, was principally responsible for the unexpected and speedy end of the movement.

C. THE BIRSA MOVEMENT IN CHOTANAGPUR

Reference has been made above to the ferments of discontent among the Kols, Santals and other primitive tribes in the neighbourhood before the great outbreak of 1857, culminating in the great revolt of the Santals in 1855-7.[114b] Although these were rigorously suppressed, sometimes with undue severity, discontent and consequent unrest led to occasional outbursts even during the second half of the nineteenth century. There were some agrarian distur-

bances between 1881 and 1895, but the most serious revolt was that under the leadership of Shri Birsa, of the Munda tribe. Like the Wahabi and Kuka movements, "the underlying object of the Birsa movement was internal purification, and along with it was associated the desire to remove the alien government and its supporters, the landlords, who were considered to be responsible for various socio-economic changes affecting the conditions of the people of this area. Educated (at Chaibasa) and with some knowledge of English, Birsa had become a convert of the German Mission. What he received there did not satisfy his soul. He reverted to the original Munda faith of his ancestors. He was also influenced by Hindu ideas of purity. By the beginning of the monsoon of the year 1895 an inner urge led this youth of about 21 to promulgate a new faith, the tenets of which, he declared, he had received from Sing Bonga himself, through which he held out a programme for the cultivation of higher ethical virtues for self-purification of those who joined his fold. He asked his followers to give up sacrificing before many *bongas* or deities and to worship only one God, Sing Bonga. They were required to lead chaste and pure life, to abstain from all intoxicants including *haaria*, to observe clean habits, discard animal food and to wear sacred thread. His disciples grew in large numbers including even Christian converts. To them he appeared as a new prophet, an incarnation of God, *'Dharti Aba'* or *Father of the World*, possessed of supernatural powers, and his village Chalkad soon became a centre of pilgrimage for thousands of Mundas."[114c]

The popularity of Birsa 'Bhagwan' among the Mundas alarmed the Government. They "considered his tenets to be 'dangerous' and scented political designs in the movement aiming at the overthrow of the British *raj* and establishment of Munda self-government."[114d] The authorities therefore decided to arrest Birsa, but were afraid of serious consequences that might follow any attempt to do so in broad daylight. The Deputy Commissioner of Ranchi wrote: "The temper of the crowd was such that it could have resisted with force which suggested to me to order the arrest of Birsa to be carried out by night. It was humanly speaking certain that had an armed police force attempted the arrest of Birsa even under the command of the D.S.P. himself, in the open day, there would have been resistance and most probably with an opposing crowd of armed men (it) might have been most serious".[114e]

So "Mr. Meares, the District Superintendent of Police at Ranchi, went to Chalkad on the 24th August, 1895, and cleverly reached the place, where Birsa was sleeping in the night, without the knowledge of those who were around him, 'gagged his mouth with his pocket

handkerchief, took him on his elephant,' and came away secretly to Ranchi before anybody could offer resistance".[114f]

Birsa and his fifteen followers, who were also arrested with him, were sentenced to rigorous imprisonment for two years and payment of fine. The other accused were let off with a small fine only. In passing the sentence the Deputy Commissioner of Ranchi referred to "the serious character of the movement" and observed: "Quite apart however from all extraneous considerations as to the origin and object of Birsa's propaganda, that propaganda itself was of so violently disaffected a kind and so calculated to diffuse a wide-spread feeling of disloyalty in the country that I consider that it will be lightly dealt with even in awarding the utmost penalty the law provides".[114]

Birsa was released from jail in January, 1898, and almost immediately renewed his old activities "Moving from village to village, he and his followers revitalised the forces of opposition. By rendering help and service to the people of those areas, sorely afflicted by the ravages of famine, scarcity and epidemics, they were able to evoke wide-spread sympathy and support Birsa, whom the Government looked upon as 'dangerous agitator', was a friend of the masses, possessed of a strong determination to eradicate injustice. For a crusade of this sort, he realized the need of organising a fighting force through effective training of as many as could be recruited, in the use of bows, arrows and swords. Gaya Munda, one of his close associates and principal advisers, was placed in charge of this training, as Minister and Commander-in-Chief".[114h] Arrangements were also made for making weapons,—bows and arrows, spears etc "Khunti became the headquarters of this revolutionary force, while training centres were started at Ranchi, Chakradharpur Bundu, Tamar Karra, Torpa, Basia, Sisai, and some other places"[114i] Secret meetings were held at numerous places during night in which Birsa "recounted before the gathering their grievances and exhorted them to fight against those who were perpetrating injustice and oppressions on them in various ways, with a view to establishing their own government. It was planned to take a strong offensive just on the eve of, and during the Christmas of 1899"[114f]

Birsa's preaching in this strain led to wide-spread violence on the part of his followers. Mission houses were attacked, rowdyism took place in several localities, and Birsa's men got the better of the Police on more than one occasion. All these culminated in an organized attack on the Khunti Police Station, on 7 January, 1900, by a body of 300 Mundas armed with bows and arrows, battle-axes

and spears. They killed one of the constables and set fire to some houses. The Deputy Commissioner of Ranchi, who at once proceeded with troops, "soon came up with a body of the Munda forces (about 2000) on the Dumari Hill, three miles south of Saiko, where they had erected stockades at intervals to defend their position and had also with them women and children and 'large stores of clothing, food, and cooking utensils'. It is mentioned in a Government report that the Deputy Commissioner at first used palliative words for about an hour urging them to lay down their arms and that they paid no heed to these".[114k] He then ordered the military to fire. The majority of the Mundas escaped into jungles but a large number, including women and children, and estimated at about 200, were killed. It was alleged that not only dead bodies were "thrown by the military into the deep gorges and ravines of the hills" and buried in two deep trenches dug by them, but "some wounded persons were also buried alive".[114l] Long before this incident the Government had begun a regular hunt for Birsa and his general Gaya Munda, neither of whom was on the Dumari Hill. Gaya Munda was surprised and shot dead. Birsa, who evaded arrest for some time, was betrayed by some Mundas and captured, while asleep, on 3 February, 1900. But he died of cholera in jail on 2nd June, 1900.[114m]

By launching a strenuous compaign of terror; about 450 followers of Birsa were rounded up. Eighty-seven were committed to the Sessions. Capital sentences were passed on two, and the rest were sentenced to various terms of transportation or imprisonment. The movement initiated by Birsa Bhagwan was thus ruthlessly stamped out.

D. THE NAIKDAS

The Naikdas, a very wild forest tribe of Panch Mahals in Bombay, rose into insurrection in October, 1858, in the wake of the Mutiny. They put up a stiff fight and, though never actually defeated, were persuaded to submit, and in March 10, 1859, their leader Rupa Naik *alias* Rupsingh accepted amnesty.

In 1867, Joria, a Naikda of the village of Vadek, about 1½ miles north-west of Jambughoda, began to act as an inspired man, giving out that he was *Parameshwar* (God), and preaching the purest morality. Soon he collected a arge following, and in January, 1868, was joined by Rupa Naik, mentioned above. It was decided to set up a kingdom with Joria as the spiritual, and Rupsingh, the temporal head. They established a court at Vadek, and began to collect revenue by way of religious gifts, fines and transit dues. Towards the end of January, Rupsingh revived an old claim to share in the

revenue of Rajgad, a Police Station near Narukot, in the State of Bariya, but his claim was rejected. So, on 2 February, Rupsingh attacked Rajgad in the State of Bariya with about five hundred men. He failed in his chief object, the murder of the Bariya Superintendent, who had very shortly before left Rajgad. In other respects the attack was successful. Three of the defenders were killed and three wounded, and the sum of about Rs. 800 in cash, the arms and ammunitions of the post, two horses and much private property were carried away. After the attack on Rajgad, Rupsingh retired into the Panch Mahals, and being joined by Naikdas and several Makranis, sacked Jambughoda and threatened Halol. Joria Bhagat also did not sit idle. Such panic did he inspire among the ignorant people of the district that he gained his first fights without suffering any loss. Flushed with success, he attacked on the 6th February the post of Jetpur in Chhota Udepur. But being met by the Chief, who with some followers was hunting close by, three of his men were killed. Though this loss to some extent shook the confidence of the Naikdas, their leader sent so defiant a message to the Udepur Chief that, giving up the posts of Kadval and Jetpur, he concentrated his troops for the defence of Chhota Udepur. Before disorder spread further, the Bhagat's headquarters were attacked by a British force, one of the leading men was slain and two wounded, and open resistance was crushed.

Rupsingh, the Bhagat, and Rupsingh's son Galalia, followed up with untiring vigour, were caught, tried, and hanged. The rising was almost entirely confined to Panch Mahals Naikdas. Only a few of Rupsingh's followers and these men of no position, belonged to the Rewa Kantha States.[114n]

III WASUDEO BALWANT PHADKE

What the Wahabis attempted with a vast organization, an individual and insignificant man in Bombay tried to accomplish in 1879 by his own unaided effort. This was Wasudeo Balwant Phadke, whose life and doings form a romantic *cum* tragic chapter in the history of the period under review,—all the more interesting as the details can be accurately known from his own diary and autobiography.

"Born in 1845 in the district of Kolaba near Bombay, Wasudeo Balwant did not receive much education but acquired just enough knowledge of English to be able to secure Government Service which he did while in his 'teens'. In 1863 he joined the Commissariat (Military Accounts) department and continued to serve there for over fifteen years. Extremely sensitive and impulsive by nature, Wasudeo had developed a feeling of profound dislike for the British Government and that feeling deepened into hatred when in 1869 there was delay on the part of his superiors in granting him leave for which he had applied on account of his

mother's illness. It was sanctioned too late and when he rushed to his mother's bedside she was already dead".[115]

The feelings of Phadke were deeply stirred by the devastations caused in Western India by the terrible famine of 1876-77, and he was firmly convinced that the miseries of India were the consequences of foreign rule. Hence he took a vow to stir up an armed rebellion and destroy the British power in India. For this purpose he used to collect bands of young men, explained to them the virtues of patriotism, and gave them training in the use of arms. He found little sympathy among the educated people and therefore turned for support to lower or backward communities like the Ramosis, mentioned above,[116] and simple sturdy peasants of Maharashtra villages. He also conceived the idea of securing money by committing dacoities. In his autobiography he says that he gave lectures in Poona and other places. "First of all," he writes, "having gone to Narooba's Wada, I performed prayers: going and coming on the road I poisoned the minds of the people against the Europeans".[117] After narrating his grievances against the English, he continues: "Thinking of thousands of things like this, my mind turned against the English, and I wished to ruin them. From morning to night, bathing, eating, sleeping, I was brooding over this, and I could get no proper rest. At midnight I used to get up and think how this ruin might be done until I was as one mad. I learnt to fire at targets, to ride, also sword and club exercise. I have great live (love?) of arms, and always kept 2 or 3 guns, 5 or 6 swords, *pattas* (long swords), spears, etc., by me". This last statement is to some extent corroborated by the result of the search of Wasudeo's house in Poona by the Police. "Two swords, two guns, two handles of foils, a piece of chain armour, some powder, four seers of lead and some holsters" were found in it.[118]

His aims and methods are explained in his autobiography, in connection with the meeting which he organized at Loni Khand, a village twelve miles from Poona on the Nagar Road, on February 20-21, 1879. As this was his first enterprise, his words may be quoted in full.

"Having obtained Rs. 5,000 from a Sawkar I proposed to send to all sides three or four men a month in advance that small gangs might be raised by them from which great fear would come to the English. The mails would be stopped, and the railway and telegraph interrupted, so that no information could go from one place to another. Then the jails would be opened and all the long-sentenced prisoners would join me because if the English Government remained they would not get off. If I obtained 200 men, even should I not be able to loot the treasury I should carry out my intention of releasing criminals. How many and where the military were would not be known, and thus thousands of ignorant people would collect. This would be good and my intention carried out.

"But to us good (respectable) people it is difficult to obtain money and how can it be got for such a purpose, because they have no thought (for the future). In their hearts they wish the English Government to go, but you must not ask money.

"When a child is born it is as a drop of water; when he grows up he can carry out his desires, but when only one year or five can he do it? So with a 'BAND'; even though it be small, if the foundation is good it shall grow big and conquer a government. There is much ill-feeling among the people and now if a few make a commencement those who are hungry will join. Many men are inclined to begin, and the result will be good

"Therefore I have expended money and given a feast at which from 100 to 125 persons were present. From this I concluded that if so many collected this day I should obtain many more hereafter, and if they cost"* much money, still it would be repaid. Having thus resolved I gave one man with them to prevent their separating. On the next night on inspecting them, some of the old men and some new, in all 40 persons only—were present, and on the third day we looted Dhamari".[120]

So, two days after the feast Phadke put his theory into practice and committed a dacoity at the village of Dhamari. "At night about 7 o'clock we, in all about 45 men, went to Dhamari. Forty-two men entered the village and all the inhabitants fled. We broke into nearly all the shops. . . ."[121] They looted about Rs. 400 and had a short skirmish with the police. It appears that public sympathy towards them was not altogether lacking. A lady of a distinguished family prepared food for Phadke's party during the two days they were in hiding in the ravines before committing dacoity at Dhamari. After the dacoity four men warned them that "on the morrow the cavalry were coming after them". Phadke, being hunted by the police, fled from place to place. But he could evade the police because he was sheltered and befriended by both high and low. In course of his wanderings Phadke tried to enlist the support of the villagers and spoke to them "a good deal that they might trust him.". "I said you must tell all your relations, and have no fear and understand that the day of comfort for the ryots has come They agreed to all this" and brought them milk and curds.[122]

Several dacoities were committed for getting money, and Phadke was planning to loot Government Treasury, but he was rudely disillusioned by the conduct of the Ramosis who were not inspired by any patriotic ideas and merely looked to their own interests. Phadke thus expresses his feelings in his autobiography:

"Seeing what had occurred in the last 10 days I began to consider what all this would end in, and how I could accomplish anything with such people (Ramoshis) who on committing a dacoity first of all rob and make away with the booty and then bully for their share of the division, after which they are anxious to return to their homes at once. Under such circumstances how can 200 men be collected? What has God done? If I had assembled 200 men I would have looted the Khed treasury and got much money, as at this time the revenue was being

collected, and had I got more money I could have got the assistance of 500 horses. If I had got horsemen they would have been good men, not deceitful like the Ramoshis........They fear to go before guns, and have great avarice of money".[124]

Phadke was, however, impressed by the loyalty of the Dhangars to his cause, and he tried to invoke the support and sympathy of the villagers to his cause by explaining his aims and objects. On 29 March he went to Nanagaum with his party, and they were supplied with provisions by the Patel for two days. There he addressed the people, as the following entry in his Diary under 29th March shows:

"As I had spoken to all the people before, so I lectured the people here. We on being born small children cannot lift a "Kuja" holding two maunds of water, but a man of 25 years can lift it. If you wish that a child of 25 years should be born; can it be? So our state at present is just like this. We are small, and in the same way as parents take care of their children when cough, fever and sickness come, if you will take care of us, the English having been destroyed by our hands, you will have comfort, but if you will not rear and take care of us as you are now suffering by the English so they will even dig up your children. Haranguing and giving them examples they became convinced and said to us, "come here whenever you will, you may remain in these forests without fear" '[124]

On that very night (29 March, 1879) Phadke committed two dacoities and got some money, but there were quarrels about the distribution, and Phadke found that the Ramosis misappropriated part of the loot without even informing him. Disappointed and disgusted at the conduct of the Ramosis, the only class of men who had joined him in a considerable number, Phadke left them. "I determined", wrote he on second April, "to go and pray at the shrine of Shri Shela Malik Arjun (Kurnool district), and if my prayer was not heard, destroy myself."[125] Having reached this shrine he began to write his autobiography on 19 April.[126] His thoughts of the moment are thus expressed by way of review of his past life:

"...Having prayed and having spent much money I made every endeavour to accomplish what was in my mind, but with no result. I have not applied the forehead mark for the last five years. Having hung the mendicant's bag over my shoulder and allowed my hair to grow long I went to Nasik, Nagar, Khandesh, Berar, Nagpur, Indore, Ooojein, Kolhapur, Tasgaon, Miraj, Sangli, Baroda, etc.; and strove hard. Three times I took leave and once I went without leave, and now having left the service I have caused dacoities in order that having collected money I may entertain men. A child being born does not at once become grown up, but grows little by little. Understanding this I commenced with dacoity Finding there is no success to be obtained in this world, I having gone to the world above should plead on behalf of the people of India...My life alone will not be given thus, but thousands of others will be killed for I was not alone in this affair. One person cannot manage a whole family then how is a State to be managed by one? Bearing this in mind I commenced this work but the result has not been good, therefore, having come here I have engaged in prayer". Next day, 20 April, he wrote: "I have only seven days to live, so I think; therefore I bow before the feet of all you my brethren, inhabitants of India, and give up my life for you and will remain pleading for you in the just Court of God...I pray

to God that he may take my life as a sacrifice for your welfare, and of you all I take farewell".[illegible]

But Phadke recovered and went back to Ghanur or Gangpur, not far from Sholapur. The Government had proclaimed a reward of Rs. 3,000 for the arrest of Phadke, but he found a good friend in Raghunath Moreshwar Bhat, and told him: "If you will give me 200 men I will not go back to Shri Shela but will go back towards Poona." He again fell ill, but after his recovery, Raghunath brought over Ismail Khan Rohilla to him. The Rohilla chief agreed to supply Phadke 500 Rohillas at Rs. 10 per mensem each, and their food, and was to receive Rs. 15 per mensem himself. A formal agreement was signed to this effect. Raghunath also asked a few others to supply men to Phadke, and they agreed to do so. Altogether there was arrangement for 900 armed men, including the 500 Rohillas. In the meantime Major Daniel, on the information supplied by the spies, arrived at Ghanur on 20 July and surrounded the village. Phadke escaped, but his papers fell into the hands of Daniel. Amongst the documents, partly thrown into the river by Raghunath's mother but recovered, were a Bombay army map a diary, and several proclamations offering a reward of Rs. 10,000 or 5,000 for Governor's head, with a sliding scale of rewards for lesser Europeans. There was also a letter written by an astrologer recommending Phadke to Maulavi Mahmood Sahib who was the head of the Arabs, Rohillas and Sikhs in the Nizam's service. Phadke fled from place to place, but was pursued day and night by Daniel and Abdul Huque. Police Commissioner to the Nizam, until they came across him asleep in a temple in the village of Dever Nadigi, in the Kaladgi District of Hyderabad, at 3 a m. on 21 July, 1879.[illegible]

The rest may be briefly told. Wasudeo Balwant Phadke was charged under sections 121A, 122 and 124A for collection of men, arms, and ammunition with the intention of waging war against the Queen and for exciting feeling of disaffection to the Government. All these charges were amply proved by his diary, autobiography, and his own confessions, as well as by various witnesses called for the prosecution. He was sentenced to transportation for life, the judge expressing his regret that the law did not permit him to pass a heavier sentence. The Government decided to send him to Aden in place of the Andamans. He was put in a steamer which left Bombay on 3 January, 1880. He was fettered and placed in solitary confinement in the Aden Jail in a cell close to the office where the night-guards were posted. Nevertheless, on October 13, 1880, at about 11-30 p m., he effected his escape by pulling a door off the hinges and taking off his fetters with a hinge. He was, however,

recaptured on the next day. Since August, 1882, he reduced his food by half and developed phthisis. He gradually sank and died on 17 February, 1883.

The history of Phadke has been dealt with at some length because though it was a curious phenomenon—one man standing out against the mighty British empire—, it left its legacy, and the seeds he sowed grew into a mighty banyan tree, with its shoots spread all over India, in about a quarter of a century's time. His patriotism and daring spirit were taken up by the Chapekar brothers, to whom reference will be made later, and from them it was taken over by the revolutionary wing of the Indian nationalists early in the twentieth century. Even his method of secretly collecting arms, imparting military training to youths, and securing necessary funds by means of political dacoities were followed by the latter. He may, therefore, be justly called the father of militant nationalism in India.

The life and death of Phadke also throw interesting sidelight on the attitude of the Indians *vis à vis* the British Government. The sympathy and support which he received from simple village folk in spite of his activities against the Government carried on with the help of money forcibly exacted from the people, give us a glimpse of the spirit of real India such as was more fully manifested thirty years later. But it was not the village folk alone who appreciated Phadke. There was great public enthusiasm during his trial, and the vast crowd which had assembled to witness his trial shouted out "success to Wasudeo". When Wasudeo was brought to the railway station at Poona after his conviction, a European lady presented him with a bunch of flowers. There was also a big gathering in the railway station at Poona when he was being removed, so much so that the Government was taken aback at the respect shown to him by the people. Some Indian newspapers[129] like the *Indu Prakash* explained this public feeling as an expression of compassion for his fate, rather than approval of his actions. Others, like the *Shivaji*, denounced his methods, but highly appreciated his intentions, disinterestedness and self-denial. On the other hand, the *Deccan Star* of the 23rd November, in its principal leader, obseved:

"In the eyes of his countrymen, Wasudev Balwant Phadke did not commit any wrong........Wasudev, though a Brahman, showed a truly Christian spirit when he tried to relieve the misery of his countrymen. Those who censure Wasudev for pursuing the course which he did, are simply dissemblers........By sacrificing himself he has averted the danger which sooner or later must follow intolerable oppression. We consider him as the harbinger of a bright future for India".

Some papers steered a middle course. The *Bodha Sudhakar* observed:

> "Some journals in Bombay have heaped all kinds of opprobrious epithets on Wasudev; but the publication of his autobiography shows that he possessed some sterling qualities. He must be classed with some of the best benefactors of mankind, but having directed his attention solely to one object, he lost his balance and became demented. His intentions were good, but the means by which he hoped to carry out his ideas were utterly unsuited to the times. We are certain that those who esteem and applaud Washington will do the same in the case of Wasudev; but the natives of India have lost all ideas of patriotism, and hence there is no one among them to appreciate him".

The last-named paper condemned the dacoities committed by Phadke, and this is indeed a crucial question in forming a proper judgment of Phadke, and of the followers of his cult in the next century. It is quite clear from Phadke's own diary and autobiography that he mercilessly beat and tortured innocent men and women for extorting money from them. Thus we read that 'the wife of a Baniya was so fat and strong that she was beaten much but would not move from the place where she was sitting and under which she had property buried'.[130] On another occasion, Phadke. irritated by the refusal of the inmates of the house to disclose the whereabouts of its owners, the Baniyas, ordered his men to cut the people's noses as they were telling lies. When the two Baniyas were found,

> "they were seized and brought but refused to give anything although we beat them much, and at length one of my men, Pandya, cut one of their ears and injured his nose Even then they agreed to nothing. At one time they said they would point out their money, but afterwards changed These Banyas had oppressed the people so much that many came forward and said if you will revenge us we shall be much pleased Attending to what the people asked I burnt all the papers, etc., of these Banyas".[130a]

On the face of it, it is difficult not to condemn these crimes in the strongest language. How far these kinds of cruelties are justified by the object which Phadke had in view is a matter for serious consideration. It raises the eternal problem—how far the end justifies the means. The analogy of cruelties of war is put forward by many to justify such cruelties, but opinions are bound to differ widely on this issue.

IV. INDIGO RIOTS

The outrages perpetrated by the British indigo-planters in India constitute one of the blackest chapters in the history of British rule in India. As they affected only a part of Bengal and Bihar it is not necessary to deal with them in a very detailed manner in a general history of India, but the enormity of the crimes and the consequences to which they led make it imperative to make a com-

prehensive survey of the subject. Fortunately for historians, there are abundant materials of an authentic character to enable them to draw an accurate picture of this memorable episode, which is extremely painful to an Indian and highly disgraceful to an Englishman.

It may be a pure accident, but is certainly a fact, that at the very moment when Britain abolished, first the slave-trade (1807) and then the slavery itself in British dominions (1833), slavery was introduced by the British in India in another form, which might differ in degree but not in kind. It seems, in other words, as if the British introduced slavery in India to make up for the losses suffered by them in other territories.

The cultivation of indigo plants by the British on an organized system goes back to the beginning of the nineteenth century. Two methods of cultivating indigo were generally followed; namely the *nijabad* cultivation conducted by the indigo-planter at his own expense on his own land, and the *ryoti* cultivation, conducted by the *ryot* (cultivator) at his own expense on his own land, under an agreement with the planter. This agreement laid down the rate at which the *ryot* would be paid for his produce, and was accompanied by an advance paid to him, to be deducted from his dues when account was made up for the year. Though on paper it looked quite simple and unobjectionable, in practice it was open to grave abuses. These may be summed up as follows:[131]

1. Various charges were realized from a *ryot*, e.g., for supply of seeds, price of stamps for the agreement, carting charges etc. The price paid to him was much below the market rate, normally less than half or one-third.

The Indigo Commission found that the produce was taken from the *ryots* at a fixed rate of Rs. 4 per *maund*, while the market rate varied from ten to thirty Rupees. The planter forced the *ryot* to sow indigo in the field selected by himself,—the very best which the *ryot* possessed and in which he could easily sow a much more remunerative crop. The planter measured the land according to a standard which was one-fourth to one-half larger than the normal one, so that the *ryot* had to cultivate indigo on a larger scale than he had stipulated for. Similarly, he was cheated by wrong measurements of the bundle of indigo plants which he delivered to the factory. By these means the poor *ryot* was forced to sow indigo on his best lands, but hardly received anything by way of return. Out of the little amount, if any, that the *ryot* got from the planter, he had to pay gratuities to the *gomastah* and other employees of the planter as they had ample means of injuring him in many ways by making

false representations to the planter.[132] In many cases the *ryot* had to pay the gratuity out of his own pocket (though, of course, he had no coat). It may appear incredible to many that most of the *ryots* got little or nothing for the cultivation. But here are well-authenticated facts. "Of 33,200 indigo *raiyats* who cultivated for the Bengal Indigo Company's concerns in 1858-59, only 2,448 were shown by Mr. Larmour to have received any payment for plant delivered, beyond the trifle of cash advanced".[133] It is necessary to add that the *ryot* had to pay gratuities to the planter's employees all the same, and further that the above figures represent the state of things at a time when many of the old abuses were partially removed.

2. As the *ryot* received little or no amount, he was not in a position to repay the advance he had taken from the planter. There was a clause in his agreement that any balance shall be paid not in money, but in indigo, at the low rate fixed. "These are the lawful, or *quasi*-lawful, means of *insisting on the raiyats, or families of raiyats*, who have once touched an advance, continuing to cultivate".[134] Sons, succeeding to their father's property and debts, were held liable for their father's engagements and continued to sow indigo for planters without practically any remuneration. As the Indigo Commission aptly remarked "Once a *ryot* took advance he is never afterwards a free man".[135] One might well add: 'nor were his sons and even grandsons'. Even when a *ryot* found means to pay off the debts accumulating for years, in order to get rid of indigo plantation, he was not allowed to do so. A planter honestly avowed that "to encourage any *ryot* to pay off his balances would be virtually to close the factory".[136] The dictum, "once a slave always a slave", was fully applicable to the indigo cultivators in Bengal.

3. It is true that this slavery was not recognized by law, but there were ample means to enforce it. The British indigo-planters took the law in their own hands. The Indigo Commission asked a respectable witness "If the *ryots* have for the last twenty years been unwilling to sow indigo, how then have they gone on cultivating the plant up to the present time?" Straight came the answer, without any hesitation "by numerous acts of oppression and violence, by locking them up in godowns, burning their houses, beating them etc."[137]

The terrible repression of the British planters on the hapless and helpless cultivators of Bengal was known to the Government, and partially admitted by them, as far back as 1810, when they withdrew the licences granted to four planters "on account of the severe ill-usage of the natives proved against them."[138] The violence and oppression of the planters grew apace in course of time.

as the removal of restrictions on immigration of Englishmen into India increased their number. For a time the mutual quarrels and strifes between neighbouring planters added a new element of disorder. But this indirectly helped the cultivators as rival planters, out of sheer necessity, had to bid for better terms to attract cultivators. But the planters soon realized their folly. By mutual agreement they portioned out the country amongst themselves and specified the zone of individual operations—and oppression; the formation of the Indigo Planters' Association gave them added opportunity for oppression and increased their immunity from retribution. Referring to this Sir John Peter Grant, Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, made the following observations in a minute on the Report of the Indigo Commission of 1860[139]

"Commencing from a time about 15 years ago, and especially since the establishment of the Indigo Planters' Association, the planters, having portioned out the country amongst them, now honourably abstain from interfering with the portions of their neighbours The result has been advantageous to themselves, and it has removed one fertile source of affrays. But, though it has saved Magistrates much trouble, and has been good for the general peace of the country, the result has been anything but good for the raiyat as a grower of indigo plant When he stood in the midst of rival manufacturers, many of them at feud with each other, he had some refuge from oppression or vexation under any one, and there was some check upon planters in their relation with raiyats, which has now ceased to exist. It is only this system of local indigo seigniories that made it possible for the planters to commit the fatal error of insisting upon indigo plant at the old price in the last few years, when the prices of agricultural produce have doubled, or nearly doubled"[140]

To strengthen still further their position, *vis à vis* the cultivators, the planters secured the *zamindari* or *putni* rights by purchase, which was not unoften brought about by intimidation backed by the British officials As Grant comments. "When the *raiyat* has a *zamindar*, who is not an indigo manufacturer, he has some protector in indigo matters. When the same man is indigo manufacturer and *zamindar*, or *zamindar's* representative, the *raiyat* has no such protection".[141] Now the planters got absolute authority over the poor illiterate cultivators lving in the interior of Bengal far away from law courts, police or educated public to whom they could turn for redress With a band of hired *lathials* (stalwart upcountrymen armed with heavy clubs) and a host of minor officials and menials of the most despicable character, the British indigo-planters scoured the country, and did not shrink from any brutality to bring the recalcitrant cultivators to their senses and force them to cultivate indigo at a loss which they could ill afford to sustain. The plaintive cries of the oppressed cultivators rent the sky of Bengal for half a century, and found eloquent expression in pamphlets, folksongs[142] and a drama, *Nil-darpan*, by Dinabandhu Mitra, which so much moved

the spectators in theatres that one of them is alleged to have hurled shoes at the indigo-planters on the stage (i.e. those who acted as such). A faint echo of this may still be heard in the horrible revelations made at the time through the press, and also in the evidence tendered before the Indigo Commission, not only by the suffering cultivators but by other respectable witnesses, including many English missionaries. The findings of this Commission do not do full justice to the subject, as many charges could not be possibly substantiated by such positive evidences as would satisfy an official body of a *quasi-judicial* character, composed of four Englishmen and one Indian.[143] Without casting any aspersion on the fairness of the English members, excluding the nominee of the Indigo Planters' Association, it may be pointed out that with the best intention in the world such a Commission can neither find out the whole truth nor give free and frank expression of their individual opinion. In judging of the value of the report of this Commission, one must take into consideration the difference between the two reports on the atrocities in the Punjab in 1919,—one by the official Committee and the other by a small committee appointed by the Indian National Congress, composed of some of the best Indians of the time. Nevertheless, as in the case of the Punjab, even the report of the official Commission on Indigo —the only one available in this case—fully substantiates the grave allegations made by the cultivators and the public.

4 These allegations may be summed up as follows.

That the cultivation of indigo was not voluntary on the part of the *ryot;* that he was compelled to plough, sow, and weed his land, and to cut and cart the plant at times when he would prefer being engaged in other agricultural work of superior profit; that the land devoted to indigo was selected by the servants of the planters, was the best land very often, and was sometimes forcibly ploughed up to be resown with indigo when it was already sown with other crops, that the cultivation was thus rendered irksome and harassing to the *ryot;* that he invariably became indebted to the factory and was obliged to bequeath his debts to his descendants, which almost deprived them of personal freedom; that he was oppressed by the servants of the factory, kidnapped, imprisoned and outraged; that the planters used unjustifiable means to obtain estates in *patni* from the *zamindars*, and that the system generally was vicious in theory, injurious in practice and radically unsound

All these charges were proved to the satisfaction of the majority of the members of the Commission. The only point that required further elucidation was the nature and degree of the violence and oppression of the planters.

The offences for which the licenses of four planters were cancelled in 1810, and which were "established beyond all doubt or dispute against individual indigo planters, may be reduced to the following heads:

1st, Acts of violence which have occasioned the death of natives.

2nd, Illegal detention of Indians in confinement, *specially in stocks*, with a view to the recovery of balances alleged to be due from them or for other causes.

3rd, Assembling, in a tumultuary manner, the people attached to their respective factories, and others, and engaging in violent affrays with other indigo planters.

4th, Illicit infliction of *punishment, by means of a rattan* or otherwise, on the cultivators or other natives."

After referring to these, Sir John Peter Grant, Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, made the following observations in a minute on the Report of the Indigo Commission of 1860.

"I have said that grave crimes connected with indigo have much decreased in frequency; but it cannot be said that the character of the abuses to which the system of Bengal indigo manufacture is subject is essentially altered now from examples that have occurred within the last 18 months of each one of the 4 heads under which the offences connected with the indigo, as prevalent in 1810, are classified in the above-cited Resolution Of the first head, that fatal case of Seetul Tarafdar is a very melancholy example Of the 2nd head the case of the men whom Mr Bainbridge, the Acting Joint Magistrate of Backergunge, released from the godowns of a planter, is but one of many instances Of the third head, the fatal attack on the vilage of Mullickpur, wherein one man was killed and 3 men were wounded, reported by the Commissioner of Nadia, (except that the attack was not made upon a rival factory) is a strong instance, the more remarkable as occurring long after the rupture between a planter and *raiyat* had attracted public attention to the indigo question, and when all police authorities were on the alert to repress disorder. Of the fourth head, the case which was made matter of complaint against the Magistrate, *for sentencing a factory servant to imprisonment for one month for dragging a man to the factory and flogging him severely, because he would not plough for the planter*, will serve as an example. How frequently the peace of the country is still broken by offences connected with indigo, committed by one party or the other, will be seen from the long list of 54 such cases that occurred within the last 5 years in the single district of Nadia, and from the latter part of the list of serious cases given in by the Honorable Mr. Eden, both of which will be found in the Appendix of the Report. The sole cause of all such offences is the system under which indigo plant is required by the manufacturer, without paying nearly the cost of its production to the raiyat The evidence taken by the Indigo Commission fully proves that *the "habit" denounced on the 22nd of July 1810 was still the habit of 1859*. And it is perhaps still more remarkable and significant, that the very state of things which Lord Minto's Government, as shown by the orders of May 1811 above quoted, was anxious to avoid, namely the universal establishment of local monopolies of manufacture, has actually come to pass, though not by the action of Government."[34]

Instances could be multiplied, almost to any extent, of the veritable reign of terror that prevailed in the Indigo area in Bengal. The cultivators were, one and all, reluctant to continue indigo cultivation which brought ruin upon them. The Commission observes "*Ryots* of different concerns, at miles distance from each other, expressed to us the same idea in languages, clear, emphatic, and pointed...that indigo and its attendant evils had been the bane of their lives".[145] In order to coerce them, a body of organized Englishmen, ill-educated and ill bred,[146] but possessed of full dictatorial authority and guided only by considerations of their own material interests, let loose upon millions of helpless cultivators, left to their tender mercy by a partisan Government, various types of horrors which brought ruin and desolation upon hundreds and thousands of families.

The plain fact cannot be ignored that the self-interest of a group of organized Englishmen was at stake,[147] and the unwilling millions must therefore be coerced to sow indigo by any means which an ill-educated mind nursed by racial arrogance and sense of injured pride could devise, and absolute dictatorial power could bring into operation. So hundreds of their myrmidons issued from the indigo factories with lethal weapons in their hands, and brought ruin and desolation upon thousands of families over a vast stretch of land. Fields with ripening crops were destroyed, houses forcibly pulled down and demolished or set on fire, gardens rooted up, fruit trees cut down, plough-shares forcibly taken for indigo-fields, and herds of cattle driven away But these were not enough The owners of houses, if they had not already fled, were mercilessly beaten, sometimes with fatal results, and the inmates, including the wounded, were dragged into the factory, confined in stocks, flogged,[147a] and locked up in the godowns. There they lay for days together, untended and uncared for, and with a scanty supply of food scarcely fit for human consumption. For days, for months, they were kept in close confinement and removed by stealth from one place to another to avoid detection, until they atoned for their heinous crime of not sowing indigo without any remuneration by agreeing to do so in future. Braver spirits who refused to yield vanished for ever from this world, and at least fifty such cases of 'permanent disappearance' can be traced in official records. The Commission observes: "The cases brought to our notice are so *numerous* and so *well-authenticated* as to make us apprehend that the practice of imprisoning individuals in the factory or its outhouses is of *common occurrence*".[148]

The voluminous evidence on the basis of which the Commission arrived at these conclusions is appended to its Report, and makes gruesome reading. Extracts from the statements of a few witnesses are given in the Appendix to this section. But the evidence of a responsible official may be quoted here just to show that the findings of the Commission probably erred on the side of moderation or leniency, and did not convey an adequate idea of the miseries suffered by the cultivators at the hands of the planters.

Mr. E.W.L. Tower, who once held the office of a District Magistrate, made the following statement before the Commission:

> "I wish to state that considerable odium has been thrown on the Missionaries for saying that 'not a chest of indigo reached England without being stained with human blood'. That has been stated to be an anecdote That expression is mine, and I adopt it in the fullest and broadest sense of its meaning as the result of my experience as Magistrate in the Faridpur District. I have seen several ryots sent in to me as a Magistrate who have been speared through the body. I have had ryots before me who have been shot down by Mr. Forde (a planter). I have put on record, how others have been first speared and then kidnapped; and such a system of carrying on indigo, I consider to be a system of blood-shed".[148]

But it was not the cultivators alone that suffered. The wrath of the planters was visited also upon respectable persons whom they suspected to be helpful or sympathetic to the oppressed cultivators.[149]

Concrete instances, illustrating the general condition described above, were published in contemporary periodicals. The *Hindoo Patriot* referred to the case of Mr. Cockburn, the planter of Chala factory in Sirajgunge Sub-division This man visited the village of Gabgachi with a hundred *lathials* (men armed with *lathis* or heavy clubs), and as the people refused to sow indigo, left the place after ordering the *lathials* to charge the men. They mercilessly beat the people, as a result of which one died on the spot and two were seriously injured. The *lathials* then burned the houses and carried away 100 cattle. A case was instituted and three of the *lathials* were punished, but Cockburn was not included among the accused and got scot-free. Another case of a similar nature was also referred to, in which several persons were killed, and some *lathials* were punished, but no steps were taken against the chief culprit, the planter.

The *Hindoo Patriot* also published the names and addresses of six persons who were flogged during their confinement in an indigo factory, six miles from Krishnanagar, the headquarters of the Nadia District. Five of them received thirty stripes each, and the sixth, as many as fifty-two stripes. An extract from the *Hindoo Patriot* describing the oppression of the indigo-planters has been quoted in Chapter XLIV.

The picture appears to be too black to be true, but every item is proved by unimpeachable testimony. and these incidents were known to be of common occurrence. One item has been omitted from the above list of planters' crimes, namely outrage on women. Respectable witnesses have testified to the fact that they have heard of women being seized and outraged by the planters and their servants. In view of the unlicensed brutality freely perpetrated by them without any let or hindrance, it would be nothing short of miracle if they were innocent of those animal instincts which lead to these crimes. Popular opinion in Bengal never felt any doubt that this heinous crime was of frequent occurrence, and the most heart-rending part in the drama, *Nil-darpan*, referred to above, depicts a scene of this character. The Indigo Commission has, however, denied the truth of this charge on the ground that no witness has testified to his personal knowledge of such a crime. The evidence of Missionary Lincke is of great interest in this connection He said he heard of several cases of outrage on women but had no personal knowledge of any of them When the Commission put it to him that such cases, if true, as he had intimate knowledge of the *ryots*, must have come to his notice he replied in the negative, and remarked, by way of explanation that the people "are most careful not to speak of such subjects; for once known that anything had happened to their women, their caste would be gone" [150] This is indeed the true explanation why nobody came forward to complain of, or admit, outrages on their own women, though these were matters of common knowledge [151]

One may well wonder how all these terrible oppressions could go on for days months and years, before the eyes of the Judges, Magistrates and Police It must be remembered that the planters, being Europeans, could only be tried by the Supreme Court in Calcutta and by a British magistrate and judge It was not for nothing that they raised the great hue and cry against the so-called Black Acts which sought to make them amenable to justice in the ordinary way. The privileges and immunities enjoyed by the British planters practically placed them above law and beyond all judicial control, for a Bengali cultivator had hardly the means to file a suit against him in Calcutta. Ram Gopal Ghose, by way of explaining the unbridled license of the indigo cultivators, very justly observed:

"To a large extent the impunity arises from the European not being amenable in serious offences to the jurisdiction of the Moffusil courts. I feel warranted on my own experience to declare emphatically, that circumstance has given rise to a feeling in Bengal among the lower orders of the people, that there is no practical remedy against the depredations and cruelties of European planters".[152]

This was admitted by Sir Alfred Lyall, the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces, who said that the "Assam planters regarded it (Ilbert Bill) as an attempt to do away with their right of beating their own niggers."[151b] It was common knowledge among the Indians that the British Magistrates, with the Police under them, were on the side of their fellow-countrymen. This made the planters all the more reckless in their atrocities, and the poor cultivators felt themselves to be helpless victims without any power of resistance. That the popular notion was not unfounded was admitted by the Indigo Commission, and a few extracts from the report will substantiate the point.[152]

(a) "The Magistrates have not accorded them (*ryots*) a due share of protection and support. . The bias of the English Magistrate has been unconsciously towards his countrymen, whom he has asked to his own table, or met in hunting field, or whose houses he has personally visited." (b) "The practice followed by the executive authorities was favourable to the planters and hardly fair to the *ryots*." (c) "One Magistrate threatened a large Zemindar with penal consequences if he did not make arrangements for giving a lease to a planter Mr Larmour, with two exceptions, up to this year, has never received anything but 'support and counsel' from members of the Civil Service"[152a]

The most interesting feature to be noticed in this connection is the appointment of the planters as Honorary Magistrates They did not scruple in the least to try cases in which their own personal interests were involved The Indigo Commission refers to a case in which the petition of complaint against a planter was referred by the Magistrate to that very planter who was then an Honorary Magistrate[153] As to the venality of the police the Commission remarked: "The frankest admissions have been made before us by planters as to the way in which money is given to officers of the police to ensure their doing their duty or to prevent them acting or reporting unfairly. When the assistance of the police can be purchased it is quite clear that the advantage will remain with the party who has the freest hand and the fullest purse."[154]

It is only fair to add that honest officers, willing to do their duty, were not altogether lacking. But they were discouraged or prevented from doing their duty by the attitude of the higher authorities. The *Hindoo Patriot* drew the attention of the Government to the fact that many loyal and dutiful officers were insulted and humiliated, even dismissed, for honest inquiry into the oppressions of the planters or attempt to prevent their misdeeds.

The sympathy for fellow-countrymen does not, however, seem to have been confined to British officials, but also worked upon the Government as a whole. This would appear from a broad outline of the policy adopted by the Government from time to time. The first action of the Government was to issue a circular on 13 July, 1810. After referring to the "numerous abuses and oppressions" of the indigo-planters, the circular continued: "The facts, however, which have recently been established against some individuals of that class before the Magistrates and the Supreme Court of Judicature are of so flagrant a nature,[156] that the Governor-General-in-Council considers it an act of indispensable public duty to adopt such measures as appear to him, under existing circumstances, best calculated to prevent the repetition of offences equally injurious to the English character and to the peace and happiness of our native subjects". But the action proposed to be taken was hardly commensurate with the nature of the crimes described. The circular merely directed the Magistrates "to cause stocks kept by planters to be destroyed; to report to Government cases of illegal corporal punishment, not sufficient to warrant a commitment to the Supreme Court; and to impress on all Europeans who wished to continue to reside in the country the necessity of abstaining from ill-treatment of the people."

"In a subsequent Circular, of the 22nd of July 1810, Magistrates were directed to report all proved instances of planters who were convicted of 'obliging the *raiyats* who reside in the vicinity of their respective factories to receive advances, and of adopting other illicit and improper means to compel them to cultivate indigo', the Governor-General-in-Council observing that he had reason to believe that this was a 'habit' of the planters"[156]

The Government must have been completely ignorant of human nature, or unduly lenient in judging of English character, if they really hoped that their action would have any effect on the planters. The only redeeming feature of the Government was that it resisted the constant demand of the planters for enacting a special law in their favour which would make the breach of contract, on the part of tenants (and of the planters) a criminal offence; in other words, instead of instituting civil suit the planters could get the cultivators prosecuted for criminal offence.

But this demand of fellow-countrymen could not be resisted for long. A law (Regulation V) was passed in 1830 which "made *ryots* who broke indigo contracts liable to prosecution and penal consequences, in the Magistrate's Court, as for a misdemeanour". The effect of this law upon the cultivators can be easily understood if one remembers, first, that the so-called contracts were written by

the planters themselves on blank papers which the cultivators were forced to sign by intimidation or physical coercion, and secondly, that the Magistrates, as already pointed out above, were friendly and obliging to the planters.

But the law was so flagrantly unjust and tyrannical, that even the British Cabinet, generally indifferent to the activities of the British in India, thought fit to interfere.

"The law treating one and one only of the two paties to a civil contract as a criminal if he failed to fulfil it was held by the Home Government to be manifestly unjust and oppressive and contrary to all sound principles of legislation, and it was ordered to be rescinded. After inquiries into the working of the law, and considerable discussion, it was repealed in 1835 by Act XVI of that year".[157]

The Act was nominally repealed, but continued to be still in force in actual practice. This is well illustrated by the clamorous agitation on the part of the planters against an order of the Magistrate, and the difference of views between him and the Commissioner "An application had been made to the Magistrate (A. Eden) by certain *raiyats* for protection against a planter who, they said, was going forcibly to plough up their lands, and to sow them with indigo. The Magistrate had ordered the police to proceed to the spot, instructing them, if the land appeared to be really the property of the *raiyats*, not to allow any one to interfere with it. Mr. Grote (Commissioner of the Division) objected to this order, on the ground, chiefly, that it imposed upon the *daroga* undue responsibility. This difference of opinion was referred for the decision of Government, as a general question respecting the employment of the police. The Lieutenant-Governor gave it as his opinion that Sir A. Eden's principle was a true exposition of the law as it stood, according to which the police were bound to protect persons and property from unlawful violence, and to abstain from entering into disputes respecting alleged contracts, which were only congnizable by the Civil Courts. In the case in question no claim was made for the ownership or possession of the land entered upon, which were confessedly the *raiyats*". The Magistrate, referred to above, rose to eminence in later life as Sir Ashley Eden, and the furore caused by his act of simple justice shows that it was an exception rather than the rule.

But if the law were in conflict with the material interests of the British planters, it must go to the wall. So agitation began and in 1854-5 the Government seriously considered the proposal of re-enacting the Regulation V of 1830 which was condemned by the Home

Government and repealed in 1835. The discussion was prolonged till the indigo situation reached almost a crisis. For, signs were not wanting that the cultivators of indigo had now resolved to throw off the fetters of slavery by their combined action of passive resistance. Fortunately for them, Bengal was then ruled by a Lieutenant-Governor like Sir John Peter Grant, one of the few British officials who possessed genuine sympathy for the indigo-cultivators.

Though even this sympathetic Governor had to bend before the power of the planters, his actions went a great way in securing the ultimate victory of the cultivators.

The terrible oppressions of the indigo planters evoked general sympathy among all classes of Indians, but it is a sad commentary on the lack of political consciousness among the Indians, that there was no organized protest against the system which continued for half a century. Nevertheless, a few individuals boldly took up the cause of the cultivators and gave wide publicity to the cruelties of the planters. Three names stand foremost in this connection. Harish Chandra Mukherji, the Editor of the *Hindoo Patriot*, painted in glowing colours the evils of the system. Ram Gopal Ghose travelled widely over the areas of indigo plantation and described in a book[157a] what he himself had seen. The third was Sisir Kumar Ghosh, the founder-editor of the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, who, at the young age of eighteen, devoted himself, heart and soul, to the organization of the indigo cultivators with a view to improving their lot.

But in addition to these public men the indigo cultivators found their real leaders from humbler class of life. The names of Bishnu Charan Biswas and Digambar Biswas of the village of Chaugacha in the district of Nadia stand out prominently in this connection These two began their lives as *dewans* of indigo factories, but, having witnessed the unspeakable miseries inflicted upon the cultivators, left the service and began to think of remedial measures. They hit upon the plan which was elaborated half a century later by Mahatma Gandhi under the title of passive resistance. They made the cultivators of their own village, Chaugacha, take the vow of never planting indigo again. At first only one other village took a similar vow The planter raided this village with a thousand *lathials*. The villagers had engaged some *lathials* for their defence, but as they were fewer in number, were easily defeated, and one of them was killed. The *lathials* of the planter plundered the village and burnt it The District Magistrate of Nadia, Mr R. L. Tottenham, came to inquire in person. He found out the truth and tried to do justice, but for this offence he was transferred from Nadia. All this damped

the enthusiasm of the villagers, but the two Biswases revived their spirit by appointing additional men for their protection and arranging to remove the women and children to a place of safety. The planters brought civil suits against the recusant cultivators for breach of contract and got decrees, but the entire decreed amount was paid on their behalf by the two Biswases. Their noble example and the sturdy spirit of the two villages worked wonders. One by one more villages joined them, and in course of two years the vow of "non-cultivation of indigo" was taken by many cultivators in all districts. At the instance of Sisir Kumar Ghosh, the representatives of ninety-two villages in the district of Nadia gathered in a conference at Jayarampur, and took a pledge that they would refuse to cultivate indigo even at the risk of their lives. This paved the way for a closely knit organization. Their task was facilitated by an official reply to their petition by the Lieutenant-Governor, J. P. Grant, to the effect that "*raiyats* who had contracted to cultivate indigo must expect to be forced to fulfil their obligations; but no *raiyat* was forced to contract to cultivate who did not choose to do so".[158] Apart from the specific assurance contained in the last clause which was a great relief to them, it removed the impression, so long deeply imprinted in the minds of the cultivators, that resistance to a planter meant a defiance of the British Government. The work of organizing the indigo cultivators went on apace, and in course of two years (1858-60) the movement of 'non-cultivation of indigo' spread over the districts of Nadia, Jessore, Pabna, Maldah and Rajshahi. The planters tried their best to stop the movement by force, and were not denied the help of the Executive officers. Mr. Malony, the Magistrate of Jessore, called a meeting of the cultivators. About two thousand attended; and forty-nine of them were suddenly arrested and threatened with dire consequences if they refused to sow indigo But the cultivators stood firm. Petitions and counter-petitions now poured in from both the planters and the cultivators about their respective grievances. The Planters' Association sent a deputation to the Lieutenant-Governor, and submitted a formal petition.

"The Association represented the state of feeling manifested by the *raiyats*, attributing it in part to a mistaken belief as to the views of Government in regard to the cultivation of indigo. To protect their interest, thus endangered, the Association asked for two things: first, that Government would take steps to remove the mistaken impression stated to exist among the *raiyats*; second, that a special law should be enacted to make the breach of an agreement to cultivate indigo punishable summarily by a Magistrate. To the first prayer, Sir J. P. Grant at once acceded. A notification was issued, on the 14th March 1860, having for its object the correction of any erroneous ideas as to the wishes and policy of the Government, and impressing upon the raiyats the necessity of fulfilling existing engagements".

As regard the second prayer, the Lieutenant-Governor hesitated at first, but being faced by the prospect of utter ruin of the indigo cultivation threatened by the combination of the cultivators, decided to introduce a temporary measure of the kind, "accompanied by a promise of full and thorough inquiry into the past practice, and thereafter of a well-considered law which should afford equal and complete protection to the *raiyat* and to the planter. In accordance with his views, a Bill was introduced in the Legislature on the 24th, and passed as Act XI of 1860 on the 31st of March. It was an Act to enforce the fulfilment of indigo contracts and to provide for the appointment of a Commission of inquiry."

"The Act made temporary provision for enforcing, by summary process, the execution of agreements to cultivate indigo during the current season, for which an advance in cash had been received, except agreements obtained by fraud, force, or unlawful intimidation; and it provided for the punishment of certain unlawful acts connected with such cultivation, namely, intimidating or attempting to intimidate persons with the intention of inducing them to break their agreements, maliciously destroying or damaging, or commanding, compelling or persuading others to destroy or damage any growing crop of indigo.

"The Act also made provision for the appointment of a Commission to inquire into and report on the system and practice of indigo planting and the relations between the indigo planters and the *raiyats*, and holders of land in Bengal".[38]

This Act created great indignation among the cultivators and made them more determined than ever not to sow indigo, come what may. The state of things about this time has been described as follows by C. E. Buckland, a high English official:

"In the meantime, the excitement against the cultivation of indigo had become so strong as to lead to acts of violence in some of the indigo districts. The first disturbances occurred in the Aurangabad sub-division, where the Ancoora factory, belonging to Mr. Andrews, and the factory at Baniagaon, belonging to Mr Lyon, were attacked by a mob of *lathials* and *raiyats*. In the district of Malda, the Bakrabad factory, also belonging to Mr. Andrews, was similarly attacked and plundered. It appeared upon inquiry that the *raiyats* in this part of the country had been goaded into rising by the long continued oppressions and extortions of the factory servants. While, therefore, the rioters, who were concerned in the disturbances, were promptly punished, stringent measures were ordered to be taken to bring to justice those whose oppressive acts lay at the root of all this evil. In the districts of Nadia and Jessore, although the excitement was as strong as anywhere else, no disturbances of a serious nature occurred. In the district of Pabna, a Deputy Magistrate, with a small party of military police was (partly in consequence of his own injudicious conduct) repulsed by a body of armed *lathials*, who had assembled to resist the cultivation of indigo. On receipt of intelligence of the first of these occurrences, Government at once acted with promptness and vigour Troops were rapidly collected in the districts where the excitement prevailed, and by a judicious display of force in suitable places the *raiyats* were overawed, and all tendency to any violent outbreak was suppressed. The best available Magistrates were placed over the indigo districts and the staff of Magisterial officers in those districts was considerably strengthened. On the passing of the new indigo Act, Sir J. P. Grant issued certain instructions

to the local Magistrates, enjoining them carefully and patiently to sift the evidence and to decide in the truest spirit of equity all cases instituted under it."[26]

The evidence of the popular excitement is furnished by a minute of the Lieutenant-Governor, dated 17 September. 1860, which contains the following passage:

"I have myself just returned from an excursion to Sirajganj on the Jamuna river where I went by water for objects connected with the line of the Dacca Railway and wholly unconnected with indigo matters. I had intended to go up the Mathabhanga and down the Ganges; but finding, on arriving at the Kumar, that the shorter passage was open, I proceeded along the Kumar and Kaliganga, which rivers run in Nadia and Jessore, and through that part of the Pabna district which lies south of the Ganges.

"Numerous crowds of *raiyats* appeared at various places, whose whole prayer was for an order of Government that they should not cultivate indigo On my return a few days afterwards along the same two rivers, from dawn to dusk, as I steamed along these two rivers for some 60 or 70 miles, both banks were literally lined with crowds of villagers, claiming justice in this matter Even the women of the villages on the banks were collected in groups by themselves; the males who stood at and between the river-side villages in little crowds must have collected from all the villages at a great distance on either side. I do not know that it ever fell to the lot of any Indian Officer to steam for 14 hours through a continued double street of suppliants for justice all were most respectful and orderly, but also were plainly in earnest. It would be folly to suppose that such a display on the part of tens of thousands of people, men, women, and children has no deep meaning The organization and capacity for combined and simultaneous action in the cause, which this remarkable demonstration over so large an extent of country proved, are subjects worthy of much consideration"[27]

"Towards the end of September the Government of India authorised the issue of a notification, in the excited parts of the indigo districts, to disabuse the mind of the rural population of an erroneous impression said to have been conceived by them, that Government was opposed to the cultivation of indigo, to convey an assurance to the *raiyats* that their position in regard to past arrangements would not be made worse than it was, and that, in respect of all future arrangements, their rights to free action in regard to indigo, as in regard to all other crops, would be respected in practice, to warn all parties against having recourse to violent or unlawful proceedings, and to announce the intention of Government not to re-enact the temporary law of 1860."[62b]

The temporary Act of 1860 for the summary enforcement of contracts for the cultivation of indigo was denounced by the Secretary of State. As it was already in operation, he did not disallow it but declined to perpetuate it. So the Act ceased to be in operation on 4 October, 1860. But the appointment of a Commission and assurances of the Government to the cultivators somewhat eased the situation, and "most of the planters were able to complete to a great extent their spring sowings Some difficulty was experienced

by the planters in securing the cutting and delivery of the ripe indigo plant, but this was got over by the exertions of the Magisterial authorities, and in some instances by the judicious concessions made by some of the planters. In the autumn of 1860 things looked very critical. 'I assure you', wrote Lord Canning, 'that for about a week it caused me more anxiety than I have had since the days of Delhi', and, 'from that day I felt that a shot fired in anger or fear by one foolish planter might put every factory in Lower Bengal in flames".[161] Nevertheless, troubles continued and the situation was full of danger. "In the spring of 1861 the planters complained of the difficulty of realizing their rents, of being forcibly dispossessed of their *nij-abad* lands, and of danger to their own lives and those of their servants". On the other hand there are clear evidences of the outrages by the planters. "At the village of Sadhuhati in the Jhenidah sub-division of Jessore, six of the villagers were killed and wounded".[162] The real fact seems to be that the united front presented by the peasants, determined to have nothing to do with the cultivation of indigo, threatened the planters with uttter ruin and the old methods of outrage failed to coerce the cultivators.

The whole episode of indigo plantation in Bengal is a disgraceful one—disgraceful for the Englishmen as well as for the Bengalis The comment by an Englishman, who had once been a District Magistrate, that "every chest of indigo was stained with blood",[162a] represents the views of a microscopic minority of Englishmen who upheld the traditions of their country, but the community of Englishmen in Bengal, generally speaking, upheld their fellow-countrymen on the principle—"my country, right or wrong"

The Bengali peasants, who meekly submitted to these insults, injuries, and humiliation for half a century, were regarded by others as veritable cowards, and witnesses before the Indigo Commission commented that if similar things happened in Upper India, the lives of neither the planters nor the magistrates would have been worth a Rupee's purchase. The truth of this may be doubted, as the Bengal peasants believed, and not perhaps very wrongly, that they were pitted against the whole might of the British Government. In Banaras and adjacent parts, the indigo planters were mostly free from the abuses which prevailed in Bengal, and it is idle to speculate what would have happened if things were similar. But the peasants of Bihar, otherwise strong and sturdy, exhibited the same cowardice as those of Bengal.

But whatever we might think of the cowardice of the Bengali peasants, they more than made up for it by their heroic stand against the planters since 1858 They exhibited an altogether new spirit

which heralded a new era. The forces that were at work in transforming the weak cowardly Bengalis into brave resisters were expounded at length by Rev. J. Long in his evidence before the Commission. As it has a great bearing on the general question of the growth of nationalism in Bengal, copious extracts have been quoted from it in the Appendix to this section. But whatever we might think of Long's analysis, the outstanding fact remains that the Bengalis showed a determination and power of combination such as they had never displayed within living memory or living tradition. Harish Chandra Mukherji wrote in the *Hindoo Patriot* that "20 lakhs of poor *ryots* combined and resolved, even at the sacrifice of their hearth and of home, nay of their lives, not to cultivate their lands with indigo, nor to enter into any fresh contract with the planters for the same".

The Indigo Commission submitted its Report on 27 August, 1860. The representative of the Planters' Association as well as Richard Temple, an official member, submitted minutes of dissent, and the majority who signed it consisted of the President, W. S. Seton-Karr, an official, Rev. J. Sale, a missionary, and Chandramohan Chatterjee who represented the British Indian Association. J. P. Grant, the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, wrote a very able and lengthy minute on the Report on 17 December, 1860. Practically all that has been said above regarding this subject is based on this minute and the Report of the Majority. Grant made a number of recommendations which he believed would secure the reasonable rights and privileges of both cultivators and planters Nevertheless, it is apparent that the scale was heavily weighted in favour of the latter. Grant recommended, for example, the award of penal damages in a suit for rent, attachment of all the property of the defendant at the outset at the discretion of the Judge, and joint village liability to fine for offences by masses. He relied for future peace on the good and effective execution of the law. Most of the recommendations of Grant were accepted by the Government of India and embodied in Act VI of 1862. But the most important question that came in for consideration was the necessity for criminal proceedings for breach of contract, a question that, like a hydra, though often killed, again raised its head. The Government of India introduced into the Legislative Council a Bill providing for the punishment of breaches of contract for the cultivation, production, gathering, provision, manufacture, carriage and delivery of agricultural produce. But the Secretary of State, Sir Charles Wood, turned it down in a strongly worded despatch, and asked the Government of India to withdraw it. Observing that all contracts must be based on mutual good will

and mutual interest, the Secretary of State made a very pertinent comment as follows: "The necessity for their relations with the *raiyats* being regulated by such considerations would not be realized by the planters, relying, as they did, on Government assistance, and the strong arm of the law being exercised in their favour against the *raiyat*, "who", Lord Canning thought, "had been left too long in ignorance of the protection which he might claim against the proceedings of any planter who had bound him by unreal obligations, and who had enforced them by illegal means".[163]

But in spite of all the efforts of the Government of India the plantation of indigo was doomed in Bengal. It was a great victory for popular will expressed through combined action and a grim determination not to sow indigo whatever may happen. The final blow was dealt by the discovery of aniline dyes made by the chemical process, as the synthetically prepared indigo was cheaper than that manufactured from natural plants.

But the indigo plantation did not die out altogether. It continued in Bihar for half a century more. The story of Bengal was repeated there and the same causes of discontent produced similar results. There was a strong demonstration against the cultivation of indigo in Champaran in 1867-8.

"The opposition of the *raiyats* showed itself by the exhibition of a general determination not to sow indigo, and in some cases by the forcible appropriation of the lands already prepared for the cultivation of indigo to other crops. The first instance of such proceedings occurred in a village called Jokitiya, the *raiyats* of which, in defiance of the contract into which they had entered with the Lal Seraya factory, sowed their lands with cold weather crops; and this example was rapidly followed by other villagers. The aim of the officials under these circumstances was confined (1) to preserving the peace between the contending parties, in which they were so far successful that the factory people were not aggressors in a single instance; and (2) to inducing the planters to raise the rates of remuneration, which resulted in their agreeing to pay Rs. 12 - per *bigha* where they had hitherto paid from Rs. 7-8 to Rs. 9. The planters were urged to put a stop to the practice of the factory servants deducting a percentage as *dasturi* from the advances given to the cultivators".[164] A special Small Causes Court was set up at Motihari for the trial and speedy disposal of all cases of breach of contract between the planters and the *ryots*. All these measures reduced the tension for the time being, but the evils inherent in the system continued to exercise their baneful influence and brought about a crisis again in the twentieth century. It brought into the scene

M. K. Gandhi, destined to become, ere long, the greatest leader of India's struggle for freedom. He experimented in this connection the unique method devised by himself—not very dissimilar to the one which proved so fruitful in Bengal for fighting against the oppression of the planters—, and the same method, which curbed the power of the British planters, was later applied with equal success against the British race as a whole.

The sad and disgraceful story of the indigo cultivation in Bengal cannot be concluded without reference to a tragic episode. Mention has been made above of the drama, '*Nil-darpan*' (Mirror of Indigo), written in Bengali by Dinabandhu Mitra, a high Government official. The popularity of the book roused the interest even of Europeans, several of whom expressed a desire for an English translation. This was made in 1861 by a Bengali gentleman under the superintendence of the Rev. J. Long. It was stated in the introduction to the Translation that the book "pleads the cause of those who are the feeble; it describes a respectable *raiyat*, a peasant proprietor, happy with his family in the enjoyment of his land till the indigo system compelled him to take advances, to neglect his own land, to cultivate crops which beggared him, reducing him to the condition of a serf and a vagabond; the effects of this on his home, children, and relatives are pointed out in language. plain but true; it shows how arbitrary power debases the lord as well as the peasant; reference is also made to the partiality of various Magistrates in favour of planters and to the Act of the last year penally enforcing indigo contracts.

"The translation, with a preface by the author, Rai Dinabandhu Mitra Bahadur, a man of some erudition and poetical ability, was circulated with the sanction of the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Mr. W. S. Seton-Karr. The Landholders' and Commercial Association through their Secretary, Mr. W. F. Fergusson, addressed Government, asking whether the publication had been circulated with the sanction and authority of the Government of Bengal, and for the names of the parties who had circulated 'a foul and malicious libel on indigo planters tending to excite sedition and breaches of the peace', with a view to their prosecution. In the correspondence which ensued, Government pointed out that indigo planters were not the only class, native or European, criticised in the Bengali play: as faults had been imputed as unsparingly to European Magistrates, native officials, and native factory *amla*, as to indigo planters. The Association took action in the Courts. Mr. Manuel, the printer of the translation, was prosecuted in the Supreme Court for libel, and fined. The Reverend Mr. Long, who had superintended the translation of the play, was fined and imprisoned for a month by the

same Court. The fine was at once paid by Babu Kali Prosanna Singha".[165] But the matter did not end here. Both Mr. Seton-Karr and the Lieutenant-Governor Sir J. P. Grant, who discussed the subject among themselves, were in favour of the English translation of *'Nil-darpan'* and the following passage from a minute of the latter lucidly express the views of both:

"I have always been of opinion, that considering our state of more than semi-isolation from all classes of native society, public functionaries in India have been habitually too regardless of those depths of native feeling which do not show upon the surface and too habitually careless of all means of information which are available to us for ascertaining them. Popular songs everywhere, and, in Bengal, popular native plays, are amongst the most potent, and most neglected, of those means. I have always attributed our unforewarned condition, when the shock of 1857 occurred, to this popular defect. I did not on this occasion regard the matter as one of importance, but still the opportunity seemed a good one of knowing how natives spoke of the indigo question among themselves when they had no European to please or to displease by opening their minds.

"Mr Seton-Karr's ideas on this point were the same as mine, and I had thought it was understood, when our conversation on the subject was ended, that the translation and the printing of a few copies were to be a wholly private affair."[166]

A great uproar was caused in the European community, and Seton-Karr was taken to task for circulating the book under official frank. He tendered his resignation and it was accepted by the Government of India against the recommendation of Sir J P Grant Grant also did not go unscathed. He was severely censured by the Governor-General in Council for having taken too lenient view of the "very serious infractions of the Secretary's duty," which had among other things, "wounded, however unintentionally, the feelings of many of his fellow-countrymen".[167] Thus did the indigo-planters and their sympathetic fellow-countrymen succeed in venting their wrath upon the two officials and a popular missionary, distinguished for his knowledge of, and interest in, the language, literature and people of Bengal: for they had committed the grave crime of expressing genuine sympathy for the oppressed cultivators of indigo who were forced to work under a system tantamount to slavery. It is probable, that all the three were guilty of technical errors, due to oversight. But it may be safely presumed, that such errors would not have caused even a ripple in the water, but for the pent-up feelings and excitement of the indigo-planters and their sympathetic fellow-countrymen in India. The Secretary of State evidently took this view, for though he upheld the Government of India's action in accepting the resignation of Seton-Karr as Secretary to Bengal Government, he recommended that the latter might be appointed to a suitable office. Seton-Karr subsequently became a Judge of the High Court and Secretary to the Government of India

Before concluding this tragic chapter in the history of British rule in India it may be pointed out that the terrible horrors of the indigo plantation, which continued in a more or less aggravated form, either in Bengal or in Bihar, almost throughout the British rule in India, cannot be regarded as a passing episode or even a mere nightmare. It illustrates a characteristic phase of Anglo-Saxon Colonialism. As Rev. Long observed: "The testimony borne throughout in the Aborigines Protection Committee Report of the House of Commons has established the fact that throughout the world wherever the Anglo-Saxon Colonists came into contact with natives, the natives were either extirpated or reduced to serfdom".[167a] In Bengal the truth was further illustrated by the condition of the *coolies* or labourers in the tea plantations of Assam. They were no better than serfs and were subjected to the same kind of brutal treatment as the cultivators of indigo, so far as their persons were concerned. This topic will be discussed in Chapter LV

Emphasis must also be laid upon another aspect of the Indigo riots, namely the importance of this agitation in India's future struggle for freedom. The following passage in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* of 22 May, 1874, clearly elucidates this view, as it struck a contemporary young Bengali patriot

"It was the indigo disturbances which first taught the natives the value of combination and political agitation Indeed it was the first revolution in Bengal after the advent of the English If there be a second revolution it will be to free the nation from the death grips of the all-powerful police and district Magistrate. Nothing like oppression! It was the oppression which brought about the glorious revolution in England and it was the oppression of half a century by indigo planters which at last roused the half dead Bengalee and infused spark in his cold frame"[168]

APPENDIX TO SECTION IV.

I Extracts from the evidence of Reverend James Long

(Report of the Indigo Commission, Evidence, pp 153-161)

Missionary preachers, even in Calcutta, are sometimes met with a remark. Why do you not tell your countrymen, the indigo planters, to be less oppressive? Go preach to them first". And I have frequently heard even boys in Missionary schools say: "Why are your Christian countrymen as bad as we are, and yet you say, your religion is better than ours"

The lower orders of Bengalees have lately adopted more independent habits of thought...It has had much to do with the immediate causes of the opposition to indigo planting; it will not cease here, but will, I believe, have a very important social influence on the mass of the people freeing them from a slavish feeling, and showing them that they can, in various cases, declare terms to the Europeans. The mutiny has also roused the native mind, and has made the people feel that they have some power. English education, happily spreading in the country among the natives, is giving them a sense of freedom, leavening their minds with a regard

to a sense of justice and imparting to them an English tone of revulsion against oppression. It is also welding the natives of the different Presidencies into one patriotic mass, with a community of feelings on Indian subjects.... .....This influence is radiating downwards. The substance of these newspapers and pamphlets in English is being communicated orally or by means of translation to the masses of the people

The vernacular press is rising into great importance, as a genuine exponent of native opinions, and it is to be regretted that the European community pay so little regard to its admonitions and warnings. Books treating on native and political subjects are purchased with avidity The progress of the vernacular press in Calcutta may be thus shown.

Works printed for *sale* were	
In 1826	8,000 copies.
In 1853	300,000 copies
In 1857	600,000 copies

Bengali newspapers, such as the *Bhaskar* and *Prabhakar*, are circulated widely even as far as the Punjab. These Bengali newspapers have mofussil correspondents, who give them the news of the district and to each Bengali newspaper is attached a translator of English newspapers, hence the native mind is much more familiarized with political movements both in Europe and India, than the Anglo-Indian community imagines The *amlas* of the courts, the state of the police, the character of magistrates are constant subjects of criticism in those papers Now to my certain knowledge, indigo planting has been for the last sixteen years the subject of incessant attacks in those native newspapers, and the opinion of those papers filters down to the mass

Another source of ascertaining native opinion is popular songs. I beg to submit a pamphlet, published in Bengali and widely circulated, called "The oppression of the indigo planters", it contains songs which have been sung far and wide among natives and set to music The drift of some of these songs is the following. that the interest on the planter's advances accumulates for three generations, that though the people sell their *pattahs* (leases) they do not cross the Ganges (i.e. get free from the planter), that when the planter first applies to the *ryot* to sow indigo, he comes like a beggar, but at last he makes grass to grow on the ryot's bones, the indigo planters come in like needle, but go out like a ploughshare, and are desolating Bengal like flocks of locusts; the King looks on while the subjects are drowned; all is gone; to whom shall we apply but to Almighty God, should we shut our eyes at night, we see the white face before us, and through fear, our lives fly away like a bird; our souls are burning in the strong flames of pain . ..... "

I can assure the commissioners, that no language can depict the burning indignation with which indigo planting is and has been regarded by the native population It alarms me seriously for the future peace of India, unless an equitable adjustment of the question is made

Of late natives have repeatedly said, how can we be worse under any foreign government (French and Russian)........they see the Magistrates and Deputy Magistrates, when sent to adjudicate disputes between the ryots and the planters, becoming in various cases the guests of the planter while the case is pending. Various educated natives are aware that the French press has brought forward

the indigo planting system as a blot on English administration.... ...each newspaper is probably read by from five to ten natives, and the information in it is orally communicated to a far wider sphere. On the appointment of indigo planters as honorary magistrates, strong feelings of indignation were excited among the natives, but specially among the *ryots*. A common remark was *ye rakshak se bhakshak*—'the wolf is appointed the guardian of the flock;' those feelings found vent in songs.

II. Extracts from the evidence of Bijaya Chaudhuri, a Zamindar. (P. 149).

For refusing to give lease to a planter, a criminal case was brought against him for burning the houses of coolies and looting the offices. The Magistrate asked him "to make it up with the planter, otherwise it would not be good with him". Accordingly, he was obliged to negotiate with the planter (1859).

Q. If you were innocent why did you not allow the case to go in the Magistrate's Court?

Ans When the Magistrate threatened my agent I thought it was best to compromise the case as I was afraid of unpleasant consequences. I might be put into prison by the Magistrate. Though I could be released on bail that would take time and to remain in prison even for 4 to 5 days involves loss of respect.

Q Then, however innocent you might be, you had no confidence that you would obtain justice in the Magistrate's court?

Ans If I had confidence why should I have compromised the case?

The factory made an attack on my cutcherry and plundered it The Magistrate came in person to investigate it He did not pitch his tent but took up his quarters in the Bhowdanga factory where an European Assistant was living. The Magistrate held cutcherry in the house for three days, but my agents and witnesses were prevented from attending the case by the servants of the factory, till an orderly sent by the Magistrate escorted them ...The Magistrate dismissed my case and punished the complainant as for a malicious complaint with six months' imprisonment and twenty rupees fine The sentence was reversed in appeal.

III. Extracts from the evidence of Harish Chandra Mukherji, Editor, *Hindoo Patriot* (P. 46).

"No Muktear in the district of Krishnagar, except in Sadar Station, could be induced to take up a *ryot's* case in consequence of a Muktear Jadu Chatterji having been imprisoned on an alleged charge of having instigated the *ryots*."

I could only advise the ryots "how to resist the fearful amount of oppression committed under cover of the Act (Summary Enforcement of Indigo Cultivation) by officials as well as planters".

Q What kind of oppression do you refer to?

Ans. Imprisonment in large numbers in low, filthy, narrow godowns, breaking into houses, plunder of property, insult of women by officers of police of various grades, instigated by Planters.

Q. Do you believe that these things have been done under Act XI of 1860?

Ans. I do, after having made inquiries of every kind in my power; as to the fact of imprisonment it has been judicially established that cases of the kind did occur

V. AGRARIAN RIOTS

A. *Riots in Poona and Ahmadnagar Districts, generally known as the Deccan Riots, 1875.*[169]

Reference has been made above to the heavy assessment of land revenue in Bombay and the consequent poverty and indebtedness of the cultivators. As in many other parts of India, the Marwaris carried on a very lucrative business by lending them money at a high rate of interest, and not unoften the lands were mortgaged as security. It has been estimated by the Commission, appointed by the Government of India, that about one-third of the occupants of Government land were burdened with debts which averaged about eighteen times their annual assessment. Nearly two-thirds of the debt was secured by mortgage of land, with the consequence that about one-eighth of the occupancies had on an average been transferred to the *sowkars* or money-lenders, who were mostly Marwaris Some unscrupulous money-lenders even went to the extent of inducing or compelling the debtor-peasants—mostly Kunbis in caste —to compromise the honour of their females to get relief from the crushing debts.

Such outrages, though patiently borne for a long time by the hapless peasants, could not be endured for ever, and at last the pent up feelings against the Marwari *sowkars* burst into flame. The spirit of hostility against this class was first shown openly by the inhabitants of the village of Kardeh in Sirur *Taluk* of the Poona Collectorate at the end of 1874 Being extremely provoked by the seizure of a respectable villager's house on the strength of a mortgage decree, the villagers combined and declared a social and economic boycott of the Marwaris. Besides refusing service as water-carriers, barbers, household servants etc they annoyed the Marwaris by throwing carcases of dogs and other filth into their premises This kind of social outlawry and petty annoyances forced the Marwaris to quit the village, and the example was followed by several other villages.

It was inevitable that such passive resistance would sooner or later lead to violence The first actual outbreak took place at Supa a village in the Poona Collectorate, on 12 May, 1875 The mob looted the houses and shops of some Gujarati *sowkars* and burnt one house. The example rapidly spread to other villages in the Poona and Ahmadnagar Districts. More or less serious disturbances took place in 33 villages and quite a large number was averted by the Police. About 951 persons were arrested and more than five hundred were convicted

The characteristic features of these riots were wholesale plunder of property and murderous assaults upon money-lenders, but, generally speaking, there were no serious crimes like murder. In almost every case the object of the rioters was to obtain and destroy the bonds, decrees etc. in the possession of their creditors, personal violence against them being used only when they refused to hand over these documents. The victims were almost exclusively the Marwari and Gujar *sowkars*, though in rare cases even Brahman *sowkars* were molested. The last of the connected series of outbreaks occurred on 15 June, 1875, but sporadic cases of violence were reported even later. On 22 July, seven men of the village of Nimbut in the Poona Collectorate not only committed robbery and forcibly seized the mortage bonds and other documents, but also cut off the nose of a man who was enforcing a decree of the Civil Court. On 10 September, in the village of Kukrur in Satara, about 100 men attacked, plundered, and burnt the house of a leading Gujar *sowkar* and destroyed all the papers in the house

The Government of India appointed a Commission to inquire into the nature and cause of these riots The Commission unanimously held that the poverty and consequent indebtedness of the cultivators were the real causes of the riots. They observed that 'the normal condition of the *ryots* in the disturbed areas is one of indebtedness,—this had grown to an extreme point during the twenty years preceding the riots. The evil consequences of indebtedness were averted for some time by the transient prosperity of the American war-period due to the cotton boom, but returned with multiplied force during the six years preceding the riots'

In reviewing the whole position the Commission pointed out many similar instances of violent riots on a wide scale caused by similar agrarian grievances of the cultivators against money-lenders In addition to the Sonthal rebellion of 1855, mentioned above, reference was made to the Bhil chief Raghu Bhangria who, in 1845, headed a large body of plundering Bhils whose practice it was to cut off the ears and noses of the Marwari *sowkars*. The Kolis also murdered and mutilated the money-lenders. In Kaira district, between April, 1871, and July, 1875, money-lenders were the victims of the following offences:—9 murders, 10 grievous hurt and wounding, 7 arson, 36 assaults. There were also three suicides of debtors. In Ahmadnagar, from 1871 to 1874, there were 2 murders, 5 dacoities, 7 house-breakings, 3 riots, and 1 arson. In Poona there were 1 murder, and 7 robberies in 1873-4. There were altogether 77 serious cases in five years.

It appears that the Commission did not fully realize the gravity of the situation caused by the riots, and even if they did, their Report does not convey an adequate idea of it. This is evident from the statement of Mr. W. Wedderburn, a senior member of the I.C.S. Referring to the warnings conveyed to A.O. Hume of a wide-spread revolt in India which will be discussed in details in Chapter LIII, Wedderburn observes:

"The forecast of trouble throughout India was in exact accordance with what actually occurred, under my own observation in the Bombay Presidency, in connection with the agrarian rising known as the Deccan Riots. These began with sporadic gang robberies and attacks on the money-lenders, until the bands of dacoits, combining together, became too strong for the police; and the whole military force at Poona, horse, foot, and artillery, had to take the field against them. Roaming through the jungle tracts of the Western Ghauts, these bands dispersed in the presence of military force, only to reunite immediately at some convenient point; and from the hill stations of Mahableshwar and Matheran we could at night see the light of their campfires in all directions. A leader from the more instructed class was found, calling himself Sivaji the Second, who addressed challenges to the Government, offered a reward of Rs. 500 for the head of H. E. Sir Richard Temple (then Governor of Bombay), and claimed to lead a national revolt upon the lines on which the Mahratta power had originally been founded."[169]

B. *Risings of Kolis, Kunbis and Ramosis*

"In 1873, in the north-west of Poona, Honya, an influential Koli, at the head of a well-trained gang, began a series of attacks on the money-lenders who habitually cheat and oppress the hill-tribes and at intervals drive them into crime. Many of the money-lenders were robbed and some had their noses cut off. Honya was caught in 1876 by Major H. Daniell, then Superintendent of Police. In 1875 the spirit of disorder spread from the Kolis to the peace-loving Kunbis of the plain country, and between May and July, chiefly in Simur and Bhimthadi, eleven assaults were committed on money-lenders by the villagers. Troops were called to the aid of the police, and quiet was restored. In 1879 which witnessed the political dacoities of Wasudeo Balwant Phadke, mentioned above, the peace of the district was again broken by two gangs of robbers, one of Kolis under Krishna Sabla and his son, and another of Satara Ramosis under two brothers, Hari and Tatya Makaji, and one Rama Krishna. Within the limits of Poona no fewer than fifty-nine gang robberies were committeed. These two gangs and another in the Nizam's country were put down before the end of 1879."[170]

C. *Disturbances in Assam*[170a]

It has been mentioned above how the different principalities in Assam, both in the plains and the hills, were seized, one after another, by the British on various pretexts. The people, particularly

the hill tribes, who loved freedom above everything else, could never reconcile themselves to the British rule and often broke into open revolt. The disturbances continued in the second half of the nineteenth century. Apart from the loss of freedom, the people smarted under the heavy assessment of land revenue and the imposition of new taxes such as income-tax, stamp-duties, and license-tax for the utilization of forest products, to which they were unaccustomed. The combination of political and economic causes led to a series of outbreaks, organized by the *mels* or popular assemblies under the leadership of local leaders such as the Gossains, Dolois, or influential landowners.

In 1861 the peasants of the Phulaguri area in the Nowgong District protested, through their *mels*, against the prohibition of poppy cultivation and rumours of imposition of taxes on income, and on betel-nuts and betels. A police force sent to suppress these disturbances was chased away by the people who killed the English officer, Lt. Singer. A regular military force suppressed the outbreak and eight tribal leaders were sentenced to death or transportation.

Far more serious were the risings in Jaintia Hills The first outbreak, as a protest against the imposition of a house-tax in 1860, was suppressed with the help of a large force which was then in the Hills But, though put down by force, the people were not reconciled and soon the imposition of income-tax and the rumours of further taxes upon opium, tobacco, and fruit-trees highly excited them. There was also a wide-spread rumour to the effect that the British Government would take all their lands and force them to pay an annual land revenue as in Bengal. As if all these were not enough, an imprudent police official interfered in their religious ceremonies The tribal peoples used to celebrate a festival in which a war-dance with swords and shields formed an essential part. When the ceremony was being performed, the *Daroga* (police officer) of Jowai went there and seized the arms. The *Daroga* was beaten and he called the military guard for his assistance. People in various parts held deliberations in their *mels* and decided to revolt. It soon became a rising of the whole people against the authority of the British. The rebels resisted for a long time the efforts of the Government to subdue them by follownig guerilla tactics. They rapidly moved from hill to hill and fired upon British troops whenever they found an opportunity. It was not till the close of 1863 that they were forced to surrender.

Hardly less serious were the series of riots in the plains of Assam during 1893-4, caused mainly by the high assessment of land

revenue. In 1893 the Chief Commissioner of Assam introduced new assessment rules which increased the assessment by 70 to 80 per cent. The people spontaneously rose in revolt, and *mels* or assemblies were held all over the country demanding withdrawal of the unjust rules which proved ruinous to them. The agitation was particularly strong in Kamrup and Darrang where the people, through the *mels*, started an organized campaign for non-payment of revenue, and the recalcitrant members were forced to accept this decision by boycott and excommunication. The popular uprisings were suppressed by force, though the people made a brave resistance and presented a united front.

The first serious incident took place at Rangiya in the Kamrup District, where demonstrations were held by thousands of persons for several days in December, 1893, and January, 1894. The Assistant Superintendent of Police, helped by the military, failed to cope with the situation, and even the Deputy Commissioner, who came with additional force, fared no better. The Government then took advantage of an Act of 1861 to enrol the principal leaders as Special Constables, charged with the duty of not only preserving the peace but also of realizing revenue from the unwilling people. But a large section of the people stood firm in their determination not to pay the land revenue at the enhanced rate. When their property was attached, the sale was obstructed by all means, and any traitor to the cause was suitably punished by the people. Several leaders were arrested and kept confined in the local *thana* building. On 10 January, 1894, several thousands of people gathered in the fields in the neighbourhood. When the Deputy Commissioner ordered them to disperse, they refused to do so, and shouted: "We won't pay the increased revenue" When, in the evening, the crowd drew closer to the *thana*, it was mowed down by the fire of the military and the armed civil police There were heavy casualties and the crowd ultimately dispersed

The Government took precautionary measures against further disturbances by requisitioning a vast military force from Shillong, the capital of the province. All the licensed guns were attached and a number of respectable citizens were enrolled as Special Constables. In spite of all this the people of Lachima village assaulted the officer who came to collect the revenue. The Sub-divisional Officer of Barpeta, who was present, arrested 75 persons. His camp was, however, surrounded by three thousand persons and he fled for his life, leaving the prisoners to be freed by the people. Next evening, on 21 January, the Deputy Commissioner arrived with a military contingent and arrested the principal leaders. They were

employed in building a lock-up for themselves in violation of the prison rules. It was also reported that the arrested men, including respectable leaders of society, were yoked to the plough like bullocks and compelled to draw it across the fields. If true, the Deputy Commissioner, McCabe, must take precedence over Brigadier-General Dyer, in point of time, in devising humiliating penalties for Indian prisoners. On the afternoon of 25 January, a petition signed by 6,000 *ryots* was presented by a crowd of about the same number, demanding the release of the prisoners. The Deputy Commissioner ordered the soldiers to charge the unarmed crowd with fixed bayonets. The crowd dispersed, but the people of Assam still remember the barbarity with which the authorities sought to cow down the people.

A similar scene was witnessed at Patharughat in Darrang District on 28 January, 1894. Alarmed at the report that huge *mels* attended by thousands of persons were held in that area, the Deputy Commissioner of Darrang arrived at the scene with an armed police force The people assembled near his camp to place their grievances before him, and when ordered to disperse, refused to do so unless their demands were conceded. Berington who led the force, was then ordered to charge the crowd with fixed bayonets "The crowd pressed forward in spite of volleys of fire aimed at them, and drew back only when scores of people lay dead or injured on the ground, but not before they had thrown clods of earth and the bam boo sticks some of them carried with them at their opponents". This was the last serious disturbance caused by the enhancement of revenue. The risings and the stern measures adopted by the authorities created a stir throughout Assam and even beyond it. Questions were asked in the Legislative Council and severe comments were made in the press. The Deputy Commissioner of Darrang was transferred to Chittagong and the land revenue was reduced.

In a long review of the whole situation the Deputy Commissioner McCabe observed: "The question has therefore simply developed into the point, 'which is the paramount authority, the *mel* or the Sarkar'?". His volleys of fire upon an unarmed crowd gave the answer, though in his report he claimed to have pacified the people without undue severity. The people of Assam, however, still refer to the Patharughat incident which closely resembles that at Lachima as the *Doli-ran* or battle fought with clods of earth by the people against the armed might of the British, and popular verses were composed by the village poets to commemorate it.[170b]

VI. VIOLENT PROTESTS AGAINST ADMINISTRATIVE MEASURES

A. *Income-Tax Riots.*

The imposition of the income-tax in 1860 gave rise to troubles in various parts of the Bombay Presidency. On 14th November, 1860, about 20 *sowkars* (money-lenders) visited the assessors in their office to obtain certain information about the tax. "The information, that the *sowkars* were with the assessors, became known to the public and a crowd of about four to five thousand persons collected outside the office." Since the *sowkars* remained with the assessors for about three hours, the taxpaying members of the crowd suspected that these leading *sowkars* must have agreed to submit their returns, and they feared that they would be compelled to fill in their returns "In order to protest against those influentials of the tax-paying class, the persons of lesser influence started demonstrating by openly tearing up the forms and throwing the pieces on the ground. The number of forms thus torn up must have been about four hundred."[177]

The matter, however, did not pass so smoothly in Surat. About nine in the morning of 29 November, 1860, the residents of Burhanpur Bhagal, one of the central quarters of the city, collected to the number of about three thousand, declaring that they would not fill in the income-tax forms, and that they would close their shops until the income-tax was repealed. The District Magistrate and the Police Superintendent arrived with a body of mounted police, and ordered the crowd to be dispersed.

As the people refused to move, they were charged by the mounted police and forcibly dispersed. It would be interesting to note the reaction of these petty disturbances on the minds of the Englishmen of those days who had been completely unnerved by the tragedies of 1857-8.

The *Bombay Gazette* (3 December, 1860) commented in its editorial

"It is fortunate that, since there was to be a disturbance, it occurred in a city where the Government is represented by a Magistrate of Mr. Ravenscroft's energy and decision '*Bis dat qui cito dat*'"[78] appears to be the magistrate's motto; and the whole presidency, we might say the whole of India, owes him a debt of gratitude for summarily checking disaffection, which, had it been allowed much longer to range at will through the country, would inevitably have resulted in a popular rebellion".

The *Bombay Times* wrote:

"For our part we believe conciliation and fair words to be of no use with people who have got the notion in their heads that they can frighten the Government into doing whatever they wish. Had we had a Ravenscroft at Poona when the amiable native inhabitants of that delightful city were deliberating, in riotous meeting

assembled, whether or no they should burn the Collector's Assistant, in addition to tearing up their income-tax papers, we should have heard no more of popular indignation, popular rights etc. But the weakness of our high civil servants has allowed affairs to go on from bad to worse, till they had very nearly come to such a pass that it would have required something more forcible than policemen's whips to maintain public order. Luckily, there was a man at Surat fit for this work. Our Civil Servants are often placed in situations, demanding the exercise of great courage and generalship, and they are sometimes equal to the occasion; *but even in the trying year 1857, there was no act of firmness and wisdom more worthy to be recorded than this suppression of popular disaffection of Surat*".[1366]

The levy of the income-tax met with considerable opposition also in Thana, Kalyan, Bhiwandi, Panvel and Shahapur. The people gathered, and, going to the leading Government officials threw the income-tax forms on the ground and refused to take them. In these towns the leading men of different communities were called together, the foolishness of the people's conduct was explained to them, and they were persuaded to take their own forms and induce others to take theirs.

In Bassein the opposition was more general and better organized. On the 5th December about 4000 people gathered in front of the *Mamlatdar's* office, and threw down their notices and forms Mr Hunter, the special income-tax officer, reached Bassein on the next day, and received from the *Mamlatdar* a list of the men who had taken a leading part in the disturbances. Mr. Hunter, who was staying at the traveller's bungalow, asked the *Mamlatdar* to send him the men whose names were entered in the list They came accompanied by a great crowd. Mr. Hunter made the crowd sit down near the bungalow and spoke to them. They listened quietly and Mr. Hunter, hoping that he had brought them to a better mind, gave the leading men another opportunity of taking the income-tax forms. One of them, by name Govardhandas, refused and behaved with such insolence that Mr. Hunter ordered him into custody. On this the people grew unruly, forced their way into the house, and made such an uproar that Mr. Hunter, finding he had lost control of them, determined to retire to his boat. The house was three quarters of a mile from the pier, and on the way, egged on by Govardhandas, the mob attacked Mr. Hunter with sticks and stones, and forced him to run for his boat. He reached the boat without much injury, but when his servants tried to push it off, they were prevented by showers of stones and were kept in this position for three quarters of an hour, when Mr. Hunter's clerk persuaded the people to let him go. Govardhandas, the leader of the riot, was sentenced to a month's imprisonment and a fine of £ 40 (Rs. 400).

Govinda Babaji Joshi, a Marathi writer, gives the following account of the conversation between Govardhandas and Mr. Hunter:

"When asked to explain why the tax was thought to be unjust, Govardhandas said:

"A good deal of expenditure made by the Government is done improperly and excessively That should be reduced The salaries of European Officers are so fat that one-fourth of the salary of one single English officer is enough to cover the expenditure of the whole establishment of his office. In most of the other Departments, the same mismanagement is, found That should be stopped and the money saved by this should be utilized for the purpose We poor residents of this country should not be taxed

On this the Saheb replied. "The Government is trying to make economy as much as possible You need not tell about it"

On this Govardhandas Seth said: 'You only talk it, and publish it in newspapers. But such are not at all the intentions of the Government. To put in short, they (the Government) desire that we should be reduced to utter poverty Whatever ornaments or brass vessels we have in our houses should go, and we should be finished as the Red Indians were annihilated in America If you search the houses of the *ryots* you will not find grains sufficient even for a single meal You have snatched away from us all our trade and industries Death is confronting us due to starvation With our hands tied down we have become helpless and have been reduced to utter poverty; hence we should not be burdened with such a tax, and we shall not pay it".

On this the Saheb said "This won't do, you must accept the notice and must pay the tax as ordered in it".

Govardhandas Seth replied "We shall not accept it" On this the Saheb tried to put the notice in the hand of Govardhandas Seth and said: "If you do not accept it you will be charged with breaking the order".

To this Govardhandas Seth said. "You have power in your hands You can charge me with anything I will never accept the notice" '

Whatever one may think of the accuracy of the report, it gives some idea of the new spirit of the time

Troubles broke out in Surat also in 1878 over the imposition of a new License Tax by the Government to meet the expenditure incurred to combat the famine Apart from the tax itself, the fourteen ridiculous items to be filled up in the forms (stating the number of spinning wheels, cows, buffaloes, etc. possessed by the family) exasperated the people A *hartal* (strike) was declared on 1 April, and most of the shops were closed. On 4 April, the Magistrate, while trying to pacify a crowd that came to his office, was hit by a stone, and the people were proceeding towards the European quarters when they were stopped by the policemen. On the morning of the fifth, the railway station was attacked in order to seize the stock of grain that was lying there The Government later alleged that the rioters intended to stop the train service, hinder general business, and perhaps also to prevent the arrival of the police or military force from

outside. The attack on the railway station failed, though slight damages were caused, but the rioters frightened the manager of a neighbouring cotton mill to close it in obedience to the general decree. The mob then moved to the town and there were violent outbreaks in the city. The Superintendent of Police and two other Englishmen were attacked, and as they were hard pressed they took refuge in a dispensary. The dispensary verandah and the railing were broken down by the mob and the glass broken. In the meantime the police and half the military guard of the Treasury (about 15 men) came to their rescue. The mob continued to throw stones and wounded, besides the Englishmen, some policemen and soldiers. The military then fired on the crowd, killing two or three and wounding several persons. Although the shops were not opened for a few days more, the disturbances ceased.[174]

Although the events were not of great significance, importance was added to the agitation by the allegations of the Government that events in Europe contributed to the "popular excitability and irritability". The Governor of Bombay, in supporting this allegation, stated in a minute: "There was much exciting news arriving at that time day by day from Europe and I have been assured that the townspeople repeatedly alluded to these circumstances in terms disparaging of, and derogatory to, British power."[175]

The second striking thing was the stern method adopted by the Government to suppress the riot. A sworn affidavit by some citizens of Surat made a number of serious allegations against the Government They refer to indiscriminate arrests on a large scale on the most flimsy evidence, and also to "the fact notoriously known at Surat" that the Magistrate gave to the City Inspector of Police a number of blank warrants for arrest. One specific allegation is very serious It is said that Gulabdas Bhaidas, a Vakil of the District Court, and the other five persons charged with him, were carried to and fro along the most frequented thoroughfares of the city of Surat on foot with handcuffs on their wrists and the arm of one person tied with that of another. In order to inflict special disgrace upon Gulabdas Bhaidas his arm was tied with that of a Dubla of low caste, a convict in another case unconnected with the Surat riots.[176] Even the Anglo-Indian paper, the *Bombay Gazette*, wrote on 21 May, 1878: "Correspondents have assured us that *there is reign of terror in Surat*.... There appears to have been an unworthy spirit of revenge dominating the conduct of the authorities in trying the rioters and we would ask the Bombay Government to interpose its authority and refuse to permit an undignified course of judicial pro-

cedure to go further...*Reign of terror does not pass off in India without political effect*..."[177]

C. *Forest Laws and Rampa Rebellion.*

"In 1879-80 some new forest laws caused considerable dissatisfaction among the forest tribes in the hills that bound the Godavari valley. The oppressive and injudicious action of the *Tahsildar* of Bhadrachalam and the forest ranger fanned the smouldering discontent, and a flame of insurrection ran along the hills. The forest tribes and villagers gathered in bands, amounting occasionally to several thousands, looted villages, killed one or two policemen, and captured a steamer of the Godavari service. A military field force was sent from Madras to quell the insurrection and the Company of troops stationed at Sironcha was called out". Though the rising was put down, "there were several subsequent disturbances during the next two years, but by 1882 the people had returned to their usual avocations."[178]

D. *Non-violent protest against House-Tax at Banaras*

Bishop Heber has referred to a novel mode of protest against an administrative measure disliked by the people. At Banaras the Government imposed a house-tax which was very unpopular, both for its amount and its novelty. As the protest of the people, backed by strong representations from the magistrates, was of no avail with the authorities in Calcutta, "the whole population of Benares and its neighbourhood determined to sit *dhurna* till their grievances were redressed." "To sit *dhurna*" is a well-known device adopted by an individual to get redress of grievances against another individual. It is to remain seated at the door of the person from whom remedy is sought, without food, and exposed to the sun and rain, till the aggrieved person gets redress. Some of the leading Brahmans of Banaras organized a country-wide *dhurna* with the result that "above 300,000 persons, as it is said, deserted their houses, shut up their shops, suspended the labour of their farms, forbore to light fires, dress victuals, many of them even to eat, and sate down with folded arms and drooping heads, like so many sheep, on the plain which surrounds Benares". The authorities did not interfere, but brought a strong body of European troops. At last, overcome by hunger and thunder-shower, the *dhurna* was given up and it was decided that a deputation of 10,000 should be sent to address the Governor-General personally. As there was no common fund to feed them, each member of the deputation was to shift for himself. "From ten to twenty thousand, however, really assembled with such provisions as they could collect, and began their

march." But it was difficult to procure supply in "the hilly and jungly road from Benares to Burdwan." So, in a few days, "they melted away to so small a number, that the remainder was ashamed to proceed". But their persistence did not go in vain. The obnoxiohs tax was repealed by the Supreme Government.[179]

VII. DISTURBANCES IN PROTECTED STATES.

A. *Keonjhar.*

There were serious troubles in Keonjhar, one of the Tributary Mahals in Orissa. On the death of the Raja in 1860, his son Dhananjay Bhanja was recognized by the British Government, and as he came of age in 1867, it was decided to permit him to take over the management of the estate. The childless widow of the late Raja, however, supported the claim of Brindaban Chandra Bhanja, a scion of the Mayurbhanj Raj family, on the ground that he had been adopted by her husband, the late Raja. She had instituted a case in law courts and, though she lost it in Indian courts, filed an appeal to the Privy Council. The action taken by the British Government before the final decision of the Privy Council roused great indignation and led to a strong outbreak of opposition in December-January, 1867-8, on the part of the Rani and the hill-tribes subordinate to Keonjhar who were devotedly attached to her. The British authorities, however, succeeded after two months' negotiations in bringing about a settlement between the newly installed Raja and the widowed Rani. But three months had not elapsed when suddenly a fresh outbreak occurred on 28 April, 1868. The immediate causes of this outbreak are not known but it took a serious turn.

"Ratna Naik, the leader of the Bhuias of the hill tracts of Keonjhur, who had all along been one of the most refractory chiefs in the late insurrection, organised a combination among his own and the other hill tribes in opposition to the Raja's authority. Large assemblages took place and persons sent out to treat with them were arrested, detained, and plundered. They sacked the Keonjhur bazar, carried off the chief minister, intimidated the well-disposed *raiyats* and burnt villages. The Raja became alarmed for his own safety and applied to Government for the aid of police, declaring his own *paiks* to be untrustworthy. Dr. Hayes, Deputy Commissioner of Singhbhum, who was acquainted with the people and possessed some influence over them, was ordered to the spot with a force of police, and reinforcements were held in readiness at Balasore.

"The insurgents, numbering about 20,000, had disarmed the police at the Garh and dismounted the guns. The entire country was disorganized, and plundering was rife. The wild clans, Juangas and

Kols, united with the Bhuias and were countenanced by the other races. Both Raja Dhununjoy and the Rani were at the Garh, but the Raja's authority was at an end and the Rani's authority alone prevailed. The combination appeared most serious, and a considerable force was deemed necessary to suppress it.

"Dr. Hayes, with a small guard of Singhbhum Kols, reached Keonjhur on the 7th May unopposed. He found the Raja regularly besieged by the wild tribes, armed with bows and arrows, axes and swords, disarmed them and easily turned them out of the Garh, and the people were reassured by his arrival...." But the Bhuias offered a stiff resistance all over the country, and it was not till the end of August, and the arrival of fresh troops that the situation was brought under control. One hundred and eighty-three persons were convicted, of whom five were sentenced to death and twenty-seven to transportation for life.[180]

B Sambalpur

Reference has been made above to the renewed rebellion of Surendra Sai of Sambalpur after his release from imprisonment by the mutineers in 1857. The two brothers, Surendra Sai and Udwant Sai, gathered about 1600 followers round them and successfully evaded three British military expeditions sent against them. As noted above, they almost ran a parallel Government of their own, and the people were firm in their allegiance to the two heroic brothers. They were mercilessly hunted by the British troops all over the State, but thanks to the unflinching faith of the people they could always evade arrest. It was generally believed that any black sheep among the villagers who would betray the brothers would be murdered with his whole family. In 1861 the British Government offered "free pardon and restitution of confiscated property" to all rebels, and many of them surrendered. In May, 1862, Surendra Sai gave himself up to the British on condition that he would not be arrested. But two of his lieutenants, Kunjal Singh and Kamal Singh, refused to surrender and carried on the struggle on behalf of their chief. Surendra Sai tried to achieve his object by peaceful means and, on behalf of the leading citizens, landholders, and Brahmans of Sambalpur presented a petition to the Chief Commissioner, Sir Richard Temple, praying for the restoration of Sambalpur to the native ruling dynasty. The rejection of this demand led to the outbreak of disturbances in different parts of the State. Kamal Singh, who ravaged the country, declared that there would be no peace until the rights of Surendra Sai were recognized. According to the reports of the British spies Surendra

Sai was in constant touch with the rebels, and *talapatra* or leaves of fan-palm tree were passed from village to village as an indication of, and probably also as summons to, the impending rebellion. It was also reported that a force was being raised at Jeypore in order to surprise and murder the Europeans. The authorities were gradually convinced that 'Surendra Sai, together wih the members of his family and others, was carrying on intrigues and plots for the re-establishment of a native *raj* at Sambalpur in defiance of the British Government'. Surendra Sai and his relatives and followers were taken unawares and arrested on 23 January, 1864. Though the charge of waging war against the King was not proved, Surendra Sai with some of his relatives and followers was put in confinement as "dangerous political offenders". Some of them were released after thirteen years, in 1877, but Surendra Sai and his brother were not released till a few years afterwards on condition that they would stay at Raipur. Udwant Sai died shortly afterwards, but Surendra Sai, who had lost his eyesight, lingered on for a few years more.[181]

C. *Posina.*

In 1867, a Rajput in the service of the Thakor of Posina, levying a body of Makranis, raised a disturbance and went into outlawry. At his instigation the great-grandmother of the Thakor (of Mahikanta) fled to Posina, taking the young chief with her. Additional militia, *sibandi*, had to be levied, and matters were, after a time, satisfactorily arranged without any great disturbance of the peace. Next year a detachment of British troops had to be sent to Posina to guard the frontier against the inroads of the outlawed Thakor of Battana in Sirohi, and the arrangements then made saved the district from trouble.[182]

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1 See Ch LIII, Vol X

1a Blunt—I, 16

1b Ibid, 145

1c Ibid, 121-2

1d Ibid, 216

1e See Ch LIII, Vol X.

1f Blunt—I, 16

1g Ibid, 121-2

1h Ibid, 109

1i Ibid, 83.

1j Ibid 95

1k Ibid, 276-7

1l Ibid, 309.

1m The Wahabis branded all other Muslims as idolatrous because of the practice of visiting the tombs of the saints and appealing to them in emergencies, which the Wahabis identified with the practice of Pre-Islamic pagans. *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, edited by James Hastings, Vol. XII, p. 62.

2 The teaching of Abdul Wahab, the founder, may be summarized as an "attempt to restore Muhammadanism to the exact form it possessed during

the lifetime of the founder (Prophet), discarding as idolatrous all modern exultations of Muhammad or any other Prophet, Imam or Saint, and all forms, ceremonies and observances originated since the time of the Prophet, and finally insisting on the duty of spreading Islam by the sword, the chief duty of the faithful and the most direct way to paradise" Issac, Allen, "Revival of Islam", *CR*, LVIII. 1874, p. 46. Also see Palgrave, William Gifford, *Narrative of A Year's Journey through Central and Eastern Arabia* (1862-63), 2 Volumes (MacMillan & Co, 1866), pp 285-95. Ameer Ali (*The Spirit of Islam*, p. 357) regarded Wahabis' (of Nejd) views as intensely "morose and calvinistic and in absolute conflict with progress and development".

3. For a short biographical account of Waliullah, cf. *JRASB.*, NS. VIII (1912), p 161; *Hayat-i-Wali* by Maulavi Rahim Baksh (Afzal ul Matabi Delhi, 1319 A H.); *Shah Waliullah and his Political Movement* by Maulana Obeidullah Sindhi (Sind Sagar Academy, Lahaore) Also see Khaliq Ahmad Nizami, *Shah Waliullah Dehlavi* and "Indian Politics in the 18th Century", *Islamic Culture*, 1951, p 133 and Yusuf Husain, *Glimpses of Medieval Indian Culture*, pp 62-3. Shah Waliullah "was responsible for inviting Ahmad Shah Abdali, the Afghan ruler, to Delhi, obviously for the restoration of Muslim rule". Khaliq Ahmad Nizami, op. cit pp. 143-5.
4. Shariatullah went for *haj* at the age of 18 years, and after an absence of 20 years returned home in 1802, a skilful disputant and a good Arabic scholar Mehr, Ghulam Rasool, *Sarguzasht Mujahidin* (Urdu), pp. 214-15 Also see Proceedings, Home, Judicial, September, 1865, nos. 70-74
5. Mehr gives the date as about 1830 (op cit, p. 215) Shariatullah died in or after A.D 1837 See f n 110 (Ed)
6. White, James, "The Muhammadans of Eastern Bengal", *JRASB*, 1894, p 48.
7. Ibid, *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Vol III, p. 58
8. Mehr, op. cit., p. 215.
9. White, op cit., p. 50.
10. Proc. Home-Judl., Sept. 1865, Nos. 70-74.
11. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Vol III, p. 58.
12. Kinealy, J O, "The Wahabis in India", *CR*, No 100, p 79
13. Wadud, Qazi Abdul, "The Mussalmans of Bengal" in *Studies in Bengal Renaissance*, edited by A. C Gupta (Jadavpur), p 467.
14. Such as formation of *Jamiats* or *Maths* to help the peasants against zamindars, assertion of the equality of mankind, persecution of those who did not believe in his doctrines, etc.
15. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Vol. III, p. 58
16. Mehr, op. cit, p. 216
17. Ibid. For details see *CR.*, No 101, 1870, pp 177-78. Chandpur is in East Pakistan, Barasat is near Calcutta.
18. *CR*, No. 101, 1870, p. 179 cf S.B—I, 95-7
19. Ibid, p 183 Also Mehr, op cit, pp. 214-15 The expression means that he would be a subject of the Muslim rulers (i e the Wahabis) with the status of *zimmi* For *zimmi*, see Vol VI, pp 457-8, 618--20
20. *CR*, No 101, 1870, p. 183
21. Ibid.
22. The Wahabis called themselves unitarians, it is their adversaries who named them 'Wahabis'
23. For details of Waliullah's teachings, cf. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami, "*Shah Waliullah Dehlavi*" and "Indian Politics in the 18th Century" in *Islamic Culture*, 1951, p. 133.
24. Cf. *Proceedings, Indian Hist. Congress*—III. 1409. In two important respects, as pointed out earlier, the movement in India differed from that of Arabia, viz., Saiyid Ahmad designated himself to be Imam Mehdi and also accommodated the Shiahs who follow various Imams, by creating a new order of 'fakirs' (*Tariqat-i-Muhammadi*) who did not lay stress on minute details of ceremonies, beliefs, etc., and confined themselves to main doctrines only
25. Hunter, W. W., *The Indian Mussalmans*, p. 60.
26. Mehr, Ghulam Rasul, *Jamaat-i-Mujahidin* (Urdu), p. 13.
27. It was first published in Urdu and the text has been translated by Hunter Vide p. 14.
28. Proc. Foreign Deptt. (Secret), July 16, 1830, No. 23; Hastings Fraser, *Our*

Faithful Ally—The Nizam, pp. 241-42. Also see *Freedom Struggle in Hyderabad*. Vol. 1, pp 128-83.

29 *CR*, No 101, 1870, p. 186.

30 Nasiruddin was the nephew of Abdul Aziz, saint of Delhi. Proc. Foreign Deptt (Secret), July 10, 1839, No. 21

31. *CR*, No 101, 1870, p 189.

32. He was greatly disillusioned by his secret visit to a cave in the mountain, where Saiyid Ahmad and his two servants were said to reside, and saw instead three figures stuffed with straw to represent Saiyid Ahmad and his servants For full details, see *CR*., Vol. 101, 1870, pp. 189-91

33 *CR*, No 101, 1870, p. 381. Mehr, op. cit., p. 244

34. *Hazara Gazetteer* (Urdu), 1908, p. 135.

35. Mehr, op. cit., p. 271.

36. *Tazkira Sadiqa*, pp. 126-27, vide Mehr, op. cit., pp 271-2

37. Mehr, op cit., p. 273.

38 *CR*, No 101, 1870, p. 383.

39 Mehr, op. cit, p. 277.

40 Proc Home-Judl., Sept.-Dec., 1872; Proc. Home-Judl., January 1, 1870, No. 21, For details see Proc. Home-Judl., July 30, 1870, Nos 28-29

41 *CR*. No. 101, 1870, p 393

42 Proc. Home-Judl., August 1872, Nos. 359-60, p. 5, Proc. Home-Judl., Sept-Dec., 1872.

43 CR, No. 101, 1870, p. 393

44 Proc Home-Judl., June 17, 1871

45 Mehr, op. cit, p 296

46 *CR*, No 101, 1870, p 395

47 Ibid, p 392.

48 Mehr, op cit., p. 305

49 Ibid, p 302

50 J H Reily He was later on promoted as Dy Inspector-General of Police

51 Proc Home-Judl, Sept-Dec, 1872, p 3252

52 For details about these revolts refer to Ashraf, K M., "Muslim Revivalists and the Revolt of 1857," in *Rebellion of 1857 A Symposium*, edited by P C Joshi

53 Tayler was censured for this act of his by his successor and some English writers. Kaye observes "To invite men to a friendly conference, who actually were the guests of a British officer, to seize their persons, is not very likely treachery but is treachery itself". Kaye and Malleson, *History of Sepoy War in India*, Vol III, pp 83-4 Sen, p 247.

54 *CHI*, VI 180-1.

55 *Proceedings of the Trial of Muhammad Bahadur Shah* (Calcutta, 1895), pp 176-77.

56 Hunter, op. cit., p. 23.

57 *CR*, No 101, 1870, p. 291.

58 Hunter, op. cit., pp 30-32, Adye John, *Sittana—A mountain campaign on the borders of Afghanistan in 1863* (London, 1867), p 18.

59 Hunter, op. cit., p. 39.

60 Adye John, op. cit., p. 51.

61 Hunter, op. cit., p. 35.

62 According to Hunter, the rebel forces including those of the tribal chiefs amounted to 53,500, while a Muslim chronicle estimates them to be 64,250. Mehr, op. cit., p. 388.

63. Mehr, op. cit., p. 365.

64. Ibid, pp. 388-9.

65 Proc. Home-Judl., Sept. 1865, Nos. 70-74, p. 43. Thus the British denied to them the glory of martyrdom. Except the three principal accused and Abdul Ghafar, who were sent to Andamans, and Mian Jan who died in Ambala Jail, the other convicts had not to serve their full terms of imprisonment. They appeared as prosecution witnesses in the subsequent trials and were granted remission of sentences. Mehr, op. cit., pp. 401-2.

66 Proc Home-Judl., Sept. 1865, Nos. 70-74, p. 43.

67 Mehr, op. cit., pp. 405-7.

68 Ibid, pp. 401-2.

69. The Rajas, however, did not respond. Proc. Home-Judl., Sept.-Dec., 1872,

p. 3271. Also Mehr, op. cit., p. 464. For the early history of Firuz Shah, see above, pp. 535,585.

70. Proc. Home-Judl., Sept-Dec., 1872, pp. 3257-58.
71. Ibid, p. 3282.
72. Mehr, op. cit., p. 414.
73. Proc. Home-Judl., Sep.-Dec, 1872, p. 3322.
74. Ibid, p. 3261.
75. Mehr, op. cit., p. 415.
76. Ibid, p. 416.
77. Ibid
78. Ibid, p. 418.
79. Ibid, p. 423. The total expenditure incurred in conducting the Wahabi prosecutions alone at Patna and other places amounted to about Rs. 1,36,977. Proc. Home-Judl., August 1872, Nos 359-60.
80. James Routledge, *English Rule and Native Opinion in India* (London, 1878), pp. 73-4.
81. Ibid, 75-76 For details, cf. Buckland, I. 496.
82. Cotton, H. E., *Calcutta, Old and New*, pp. 230-1. Also see *London Times*, February 13, 1872. Buckland, I. 511-3.
83. Mehr, op. cit., p. 450.
84. Oliver, Edward E., *From Across the Borders of Pathan and Biloch* (London, 1890), p. 291.
85. Mehr, op. cit., pp 483 and 490
86. Ibid, p. 486 The comparatively recent movement of Deoband School started by Mahmud Husain, though not directly connected with the Wahabis, had many things in common including their objective Ibid, p 552.
87. Proc Home-Judl., Sept 27, 1865, Nos. 70-74
88. Hunter, op. cit., pp 69-70 Also see Proc Home-Judl, Sept-Dec, 187?
89. Hunter, op. cit., p. 69-70.
90. Proc. Home-Judl., Sept.-Dec., 1872, p. 3283.
91. Hunter, op. cit., p. 65.
92. Proc. Home-Judl., Sept. 27, 1865, Nos 70-74, p 75.
93. Proc Home-Judl., Sept.-Dec., 1872, p 3259
94. Ibid, p 3254.
95. Ibid, p. 3282.
96. Hunter, op. cit, p 81.
97. Proc. Home-Judl., Sept-Dec, 1872, p. 3282.
98. Proc Home-Judl, Sept. 27, 1865, Nos 70-74, Pt A For the names of some of these Qasids refer to Proc. Home-Judl, Sept-Dec, 1872, p 3255
99. Proc. Home-Judl., Sept 27, 1865, Nos 70-74, Pt A
100. Drafts or *hundies* were called 'white stones' and amounts intimated by the number as "white beads on a rosary". Remittances of money were spoken of as the price of books and merchandise, gold *mohars* were called red rubies, large Delhi gold embriodered shoes and large red birds, etc. Proc Home-Judl, Sept. 27, 1865, Pt. A Nos 70-74
101. Proc. Home-Judl., Sept.-Dec. 1872, p 3255
102. Smith, W C., *Modern Islam in India*, p 189
103. Proc Home-Judl, Sept.-Dec. 1872. Dr Rajendra Prasad rightly remarks that the earlier *risings of* the Santhals, the Mundas and the Wahabis were not "purely political movements for the freedom of the country. They were occasional and inspired by religious considerations also". Foreword, *History of Freedom Movement in Bihar*, Vol. I, by Dr. K. K. Datta.
104. It will be interesting to note in this connection that Sir Syed Ahmad denounced the Wahabi agitation (Letter to '*Pioneer*', April 14, 1871) as he wrote. "Muhammadans be they dwelled in *dar-ul-harb* or *dar-ul-Islam* are prohibited from rebellion against a Government which interferes in no way with the free worship of their religion". Ram Gopal, *Indian Muslims*, p. 25. Also see Syed Ahmad, *Asar us Sanadid* (1846), Chapter IV.
105. Proc Home-Judl., Sept.-Dec. 1872, p. 3261
106. Ibid, pp 3280 and 3292
107. Proc. Home-Judl., Sept. 27, 1865, Nos. 70-74.
108. Smith, op. cit., pp. 189-90.
109. For the detention of five Hindus for their pro-Wahabi activities, refer to Proc. Home-Judl., January 13, 1872, Nos. 28-30.
110. The truth of this observation is not accepted by all. Thus Dr. S. B. Chau-

dhuri observes: "The movement, which undoubtedly owed its origin to zamindari exactions, was, in its last stages, strengthened by communal considerations. Hunter's statement that in the peasant rising around Calcutta the Wahabis despoiled the Hindu and Muhammadan landholders alike (*Indian Mussalmans*, p. 39) is quite true, but the latter were not made the victims of communal outrages, whereas the former were, and this must have completed the discouragement of the Hindus" (SB—I, 97). This is supported by the nature of Wahabi outrages in Purna, described above, on p. 886 A letter published in the *Samachar Darpan*, a Bengali periodical, in its issue of 22 April, 1837, describes in detail the outrages perpetrated on the Hindus by Shariatullah and refers to breaking of images of Hindu gods, desecrating places of worship, killing of cows in Hindu houses, etc. as a regular feature. The writer apprehends that the Hindus will suffer grievously if Shariatullah's band of 12,000 Mussalmans are not controlled at an early date (B. N. Banerji, III. 312). [Ed.]

111 Hunter, op cit., p. 106; Smith, op. cit., p. 189.

112 *CR*, No 100, p 104.

113 See pp. 618-9

114 The Editor is responsible for this para.

114a. The following account is based upon the *Punjab District Gazetteers*, Vol XV A, 1904, Ludhiana District and Maler Kotla State, pp 29-30, 85-6. The quotations are also from the same source.

114ab According to Dr. H L. Gupta, the activity of the Kukas can be traced as far back as 1794 when they "attacked Maler Kotla for cow-killing activities in that State and terrorized its Afghan ruler into stopping the practice objectionable to them".
(*Essays presented to Sir Jadunath Sarkar*, edited by Dr H. R Gupta, p 109).

114ac There is no adequate evidence to justify this official view (*Punjab DG*. XV A, p 86). Dr H L. Gupta takes a more rational view when he says that the incidents of 1872 "reflected a symptom of discontent against British rule . and dissatisfaction with the religious policy of the Government permitting kine-killing by Muhammadan butchers. But to attribute to the Kukas a motive to subvert British rule appears to be unrealistic and fantastic afterthought ." op cit, p 109

114b See above, pp. 454-8

114c *Freedom—Bihar*, I 96-7 (which gives references to original documents)

114d Ibid, 97 There is, however, no adequate evidence in support of this view

114e Ibid, 98

114f. Ibid, 97-8.

114g Ibid, 99.

114h Ibid, 100.

114i Ibid.

114j Ibid, 101. Cf also the Report of Mr. W S. Couts, Joint Magistrate It is said in this Report that in one of the meetings in which the plan of campaign was discussed by Birsa some of his followers expressed "doubt as to the possibility of being able to fight the hakims (Magistrates), who had guns. Birsa, however, reassured them by saying that the guns and bullets of their enemies would turn to water and that they (the Birsaites) would become invisible. There was little dissent and no objection"

114k *Freedom—Bihar*, I. 101-2.

114l Ibid, 102.

114m Ibid, 104-5.

114n *Bombay Gazetter*, III. 254-8; VI. 64.

115 *Freedom—Bombay*, I. 73.

116 See p 446. Ramosi is also written as Ramoshi

117 *Freedom—Bombay*, I 82

118 Ibid, 82-3.

119 The original has 'lost'.

120 *Freedom—Bombay*, I. 85-6

121. Ibid, 87.

122 Ibid, 88.

123 Ibid, 89.

124 Ibid, 93.

125 Ibid, 95.

126 The first eight pages of the autobiography were written on this date and the rest, in course of the next week (Ibid).

127. Ibid, 97.
128. These details are taken from an excellent summary made by the Legal Remembrancer on 27 September, 1897 (Ibid, 81-102). For the date of arrest, cf ibid, 74-75 But Joshi, the biographer of Phadke, gives the date as 3 July
129. For the extracts from newspapers that follow, cf. ibid, 128-8.
130. Ibid, 90.
130a. Ibid, 94.
131 The facts stated in this section, unless otherwise stated, are taken from the following authentic sources.
 1. *The Report of the Indigo Commission*, 1860 (referred to as Report).
 2. Buckland.
 3 Minute by Sir J P Grant, Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal (quoted in Buckland, I. 238-271).

 Horrible tales of oppression by the planters are given in several other publications, mentioned in the bibliography
132 The *gomastahs* and menials, although paid only a nominal salary, were often in affluent circumstances, having brick-built houses of their own. Every cultivator knew that any false complaint against him by these scoundrels is enough for the planter to have him mercilessly beaten or otherwise oppressed. Kadir Biswas said in his evidence (p 152) "I have to give five Rupees a year to the *amin* and *takidgir*, two to the *Dewan*, and one to the *Mohurir*".
133 Buckland, I. 252.
134 Ibid,
135 Report, para 109
136 Ibid
137 Sir J P Grant, who quotes this, comments "The whole of this gentleman's evidence is very instructive, as proceeding from a great *zamindar* and practical native indigo planter This, diluted into becoming official language, I find to be the conclusion of the Commission· and it is certainly the inevitable deduction from the whole body of evidence" (Minute, para. 40)
138 Grant's Minute, para 2
139 See f n, 131
140 Para 8
141 Para 9
142 Some specimens of these are given by Rev J Long in his evidence before the Commission (See Appendix)
143 The Commission was composed of W S Seton-Karr, C S., President, R Temple, C S, Rev J Sale (to represent the interest of the *raiyats* and the missionaries), W F Fergusson (nominated by the Indigo Planters' Association), and Babu Chandra Nath Chatterji (nominated by the British Indian Association to represent the landholders' interest) The only Indian member, being a representative of the *zamindars*, could not feel much sympathy with the tenants' rising against their landlords, the planters, in view of its possible reaction upon their own tenants.
144 Minute, paras 2-7 Italics mine
145 Report, para 131
146. When Christian missionaries drew the attention of the planters to the oppressions committed upon Christian native cultivators, they were, not unoften, brusquely asked to mind their own business
147. Rev J Long, in his evidence before the Commission (p. 180), said: "Planters themselves have told me that under the *ryotti* system of indigo cultivation it was almost impossible to secure both the prosperity of the factory and that of the *ryots* in Bengal" He was asked. "But have you never known any planter who, under the *ryotti* system, managed to keep the *ryots* content?". He answered. "Never I should consider it an impossibility under the present system"
147a "Not content with the usual instruments of torture and punishment, one of the planters invented a novel form of whip or cat-o'-nine-tails, christened *Sham Chand* or *Ram Kant*, for beating out of the *raiyats* any lurking disinclination against the cultivation of the plant. The authorship of this was ascribed to Mr Larmour, the leading planter in Bengal" (H. C. Chakladar, "Fifty Years Ago" in the *Dawn Society's Magazine*, 1905)
148 Report, para 94 Italics mine.
148a Quoted on p. 18 of '*Satyagraha in Champaran*' by Rajendra Prasad; cf. also Report, Evidence, p. 163

149. Concrete instances are given in para. 98 of the Report.
150. Report, Evidence, p. 80.
151. Rev. J. Long said in his evidence on this point: 'There is no question that the occasional occurrences of outrages (on women) is a general belief of the natives and tends to make indigo planting odious. I have been acquainted of late years with various facts relating to outrages. From the respectability and integrity of my informants I find it morally impossible to disbelieve it.' (p. 161).
151a. R. G. Ghose, *Remarks on the Black Acts*, p. 27.
151b. Blunt—I, p. 145.
152. For a, b, c, cf. paras 119, 118, 115 of the Report. As Rev. Long said in his evidence: "Many European officials might be tempted to carry out the maxim "My own countrymen, right or wrong" (p. 161). For further details see Long's evidence in the Appendix.
152a See evidence of *Zamindar* Bijaya Govinda Chaudhuri in the Appendix.
153 Report, para. 141. For the very highly excited popular feeling on this subject, cf. Long's evidence, quoted in the Appendix.
154. Report, para. 112.
155. These have been referred to above.
156. Grant's Minute, paras. 2-5.
157. Ibid, para. 15.
157a. *Remarks on the Black Acts*, p. 26.
158 Buckland, I. 186.
159 Ibid, 186-88.
160 Ibid, 188.
160a. Ibid, 192.
160b Ibid.
161 Ibid, 191-2.
162 Ibid, 194.
162a. See above, p 921 Cf also Report, Evidence, p. 169.
163 Buckland, I. 195-6.
164 Ibid, 430-1.
165 Ibid, 197
166 Ibid, 198.
167 Ibid, 205.
167a Report, Evidence, p. 159
168 The *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 22 May, 1874. Quoted by J C. Bagal in the *Pravartak*, a Bengali Magazine, 1356 B.S., p. 288.
169 The account is based on the *Report of the Commission on the Riots in Poona and Ahmednagar*, Bombay, 1876.
169a Hume, p. 82
170 *Bombay Gazetteer*, XVIII, 309
170a The account is based on *Freedom—Assam*, pp. 25-34
170b For an account of other agrarian revolts, cf *Peasant Uprisings in India* (1850-1900).
171 *Freedom—Bombay*, I. 22.
172 This Latin phrase means. He gives twice who gives in a trice.
172a Ibid, 19-21. Italics mine.
173 Ibid, 23-5
174 Ibid, 28-32.
175 Ibid, 43. The 'events in Europe' evidently refers to the success of Russia in her war against Turkey.
176 Ibid, 39-40
177 Ibid, 49. Italics mine.
178 *Chanda D.G.*, 589.
179 Heber, I. 432-6.
180 Buckland, I. 420-26.
181 The account is based on *Sambalpur D.G.* (pp. 25-35) and the Memo of Captain F. G. Stewart, dated 24th September, 1863. According to the latter the men were "in open rebellion against the State" and "have in a letter, addressed by the *Chief*, Kummul Singh, to the Dy. Commissioner, declared their intention of mudering Gontyaas (sic), burning villages, and remaining in open defiance of the Government, until either the Chauhan dynasty is restored in the person of Soorender Saha, their late acknowledged chief, or the whole of the Chauhans lie buried in their graves."
182 *Bombay Gazetteer*, V. 385.

CHAPTER XXX

INDIAN STATES

I. THE INDIAN STATES AND BRITISH PARAMOUNTCY

Reference has been made above to the series of treaties concluded by the Marquess of Hastings with the Rajput and Maratha States. These, together with similar treaties of earlier and later dates, defined the legal status of the Indian States, *vis-à-vis* the East India Company. But though, as noted above, the British Governor-General in Council claimed paramountcy over all the Indian States, and in practice exercised it, whenever they chose, almost without any check or limit, it is not supported by the legal right accruing from the treaties themselves, and there was no other source from which any such right could accrue. According to explicit terms of the treaties, all the States surrendered the control of their relations with foreign powers; but in the case of the larger states, it was expressly stipulated that their rulers should be absolute within their own territories. Some of the States like Hyderabad and Awadh originally entered into treaty relations with the British on equal terms, and as fully independent States; and this status was never openly abrogated by any subsequent treaty. Even a State like Baroda, in whose internal affairs the British had rights of interference, was recognized by them in the treaty of 1817 as possessing 'sovereignty', and the Gaekwar was referred to in 1841 as the "sole sovereign" of his territories.¹ It may therefore be presumed or at least argued that, barring an Indian State conquered or created by the British and definitely relegated by a treaty to a feudatory status, the Indian States, in general, possessed sovereign powers But whatever may be the theoretical position, in practice the British treated them all as feudatory or subordinate States and did not accord to any Indian State, not excluding even Hyderabad, the same political status or rank which diplomatic usage guaranteed to the smallest State in Europe such as Belgium or Holland The British were in a position to do this because through the instrumentality of the subsidiary force they were in possession of the most effective part of the army of every Indian State, which had no power to resist them even if it had any wish to do so. There is thus no doubt that the acceptance of a subsidiary force nullified *in practice* whatever sovereignty an Indian State might have possessed *in theory*. It is debatable, however, whether by agree-

ing to maintain a subsidiary force, a State merely limits its sovereignty or loses it altogether even in theory. The British rulers in the nineteenth century took the latter view, presumably on the ground that it is the practical status that determines the theoretical one, and not vice versa. From the position of a paramount power *de facto*, the British imperceptibly assumed the status of a paramount power *de jure*. In other words, while the British paramountcy before the outbreak of 1857 is an undeniable fact, its legal basis is not so clear, and it was not formally enunciated by British administrators as a general principle applicable to India as a whole.

The British standpoint has been generally upheld by the British historians. They argue that the general duty undertaken by the British to protect the Indian States, which was implicit in all their treaties, naturally involved the right to interfere in cases of financial disorder, actual or potential rebellion, or in similar contingencies. This is at least a plausible argument. It is, however not so clear that similar defence may be put forward in favour of many claims and practices which gradually developed. To insist that no succession is valid in an Indian State without the previous sanction of the British; to coerce an Indian ruler to maintain a particular minister against his will and interest, or to send troops to a State on the actual outbreak or mere possibility of disorders such as frequently occurred even within the British dominions, and to use these opportunities to wring more concessions from the helpless rulers;—these are some of the instances which can only be explained, not by rights or obligations of a Protecting State, but the aggressive designs of an Imperial Power. Some cases of interference in Indian States may, no doubt, be justified by the former, but there are many which must be attributed to the latter.

The power and status of the Native States varied to a considerable extent. As Ramsay Macdonald has observed: "The degree to which the native sovereignty extends has been determined by no general principle, but by historical accident, the size and the importance of the States themselves, the terms of the treaties made between the imperial Government and the Native rulers, other agreements and usages. The Nizam of Hyderabad exercised the maximum of power. He issued his own coinage, had a free hand as to taxation, and had absolute powers of life and death. Some of the rulers of smaller States had little more than minor judicial powers and immunity from British taxation".[2]

II. THE INDIAN STATES UNDER THE BRITISH CROWN

The outbreak of 1857-58 forms the Great Divide in British Indian history, especially in the relation of British India to the States. The

circumstances which led to it were closely and intimately connected with the policy which the East India Company had so far pursued in regard to the States. The strength of the rebellion came mainly from the policy of annexation of States, and the high-handed manner in which it was sometimes carried out, e.g. in cases of Awadh, Nagpur and Jhansi, provided, among other things, the popular appeal for what was originally a military revolt. It was the doubtful attitude of the forces of some Indian States that helped the spread of the rebellion and enabled Tantia Topi to make his rapid movements. Equally, it was the staunch attitude of Jayaji Rao Sindhia of Gwalior, Hyderabad under Salar Jang, and of the Phulkian States, that turned the tide. Post-Mutiny policy was, as a result, dominated by this fact. The British authorities learnt two essential lessons from the catastrophe that overtook them in 1857. The first was that it was not wise to ride rough-shod over the popular sentiments behind the States of India, howsoever backward they might appear from a modern standpoint; and secondly, that, in view of their unsuspected strength, it was necessary to take political, military and other precautions, meant to prevent the States from uniting with each other and forming a formidable combination in future. It was essentially a dual policy of conciliation and friendship on the one hand, and a process of gradual weakening on the other.

The first step in the process of conciliation was the historic Proclamation of Queen Victoria,[2a] which assured the Princes that the Crown had taken over their treaties, and had no desire to extend its territorial possessions, and that the dignities, privileges, and authorities of the princes and States would be maintained undiminished. It was, in effect, a repudiation of the policy of annexation which had added the Carnatic, Awadh, and other regions to British India. The detested principle of lapse, which was the dynastic counterpart of annexation, and which ran counter to the cherished Hindu ideas of succession, was also by implication given up by this proclamation. The princes were reassured of their dynastic and other privileges

The other side of the dual policy was the enunciation by the Viceroy of the theory of "one charge", that is, that India under direct rule and India under the Princes constituted in effect one political unit. Lord Canning declared in 1862 that "the Crown of England stood forward, the unquestioned Ruler and Paramount Power in all India". By this theory of "one charge", and of being paramount power in all India, the independent and foreign allies of the Company, over whom, in the express terms of Lord Dalhousie's despatch, no paramountcy existed, became transformed into what

was then called, feudatories. Lord Canning unhesitatingly described the powers, which had fought and negotiated on terms of equality with the Company, as "feudatories". The Crown of England, he declared, was for the first time brought face to face with the *feudatories*, and there was a reality in the suzerainty of the Sovereign of England, which never existed before, and which was eagerly acknowledged by the chiefs.[3]

The two terms "feudatory" and "suzerainty" constituted both a theory and a programme, which the Princes at the time did not understand, but the effect of which they were to feel almost immediately in the grant of the Sanads of Adoption. It is obvious, from the public claim made by the Viceroy and the terms of the Sanad given to each State, that the transfer of the relationship from the Company to the Crown meant very much more than it purported to. The Queen's announcement to the Princes that "all treaties and engagements made with them by or under the authority of the East India Company are by us accepted and will be scrupulously maintained", stated, no doubt, the legal position. Obviously the Crown cannot take over more than what the Company possessed; and, in the political theory of the Company, the States of India were "foreign States", against whom they declared wars, e.g., Coorg in 1834, and whose territories they annexed on the principle "of abandoning no just and honourable acquisition of territory".[4] A silent constitutional revolution had been effected by the transfer of the power to the British Crown as suzerain authority, and a legal theory had to be found to justify it. This was provided by the Sanads of Adoption given to all the States which were recognized as such.

The right of adoption was conceded on the condition of loyalty to the Crown. Suzerainty was given a legal basis, and the Crown's paramountcy established irrevocably in exchange for the perpetuation of the dynasties. The right of Hindu rulers to adopt successors was never in doubt, even during the period when the doctrine of lapse held sway. No less than 26 adoptions had taken place during the period between 1826 and 1848.[5] But, since the right was to be publicly confirmed, the opportunity was too good to be lost for the introduction of the new legal theory of paramountcy on the one side and loyalty on the other.

It has been held by eminent jurists that the Proclamation of the Crown should be read subject to the superior rights possessed by the Crown in virtue of paramountcy.[6] Such an interpretation, while, no doubt, correct after the assumption of paramountcy through the Sanads of Adoption, could not clearly be read into the Proclamation

itself, because, in the first place, the East India Company did not possess any right of paramountcy, and, in the second place, it is inconsistent with the Act of Parliament by which the Crown accepted the treaties and engagements of the Company. But, legal discussions apart, the plain historical fact is that the transfer effected a change in constitutional relationship, which was made contractually binding on the States through the instrument of the Sanads of Adoption. India that passed to the Crown had, in effect, become "one charge", as Lord Canning proudly claimed, and the States became members of a single polity over which the Central Government of India presided with a double face,—a dual personality.

The geography of the States did not, except in relation to the frontier areas, undergo any material change since the assumption of government by the Crown. Mysore, Banaras and Sawantwadi were States nominally under their own sovereigns, though actually under British administration. So far as Mysore was concerned, there was never any doubt. In regard to Banaras and Sawantwadi, also, there was no reason for any doubt, and Sanads of Adoption were issued to them also. India remained geographically unaltered in the main.

In regard to the Frontier Areas, the position, however, underwent a gradual change. In 1860 Kashmir was an independent State In the period between 1848 and 1860 Gulab Singh had been supported and encouraged in a policy of trans-Gilgit aggression which brought under his sway Chitral, Chilas, Hunza and Nagar. Kashmir was in fact an instrument of British policy of influence and expansion in the Pamir Area till the Russians came on the scene, and till on the report of Pandit Manphul, the road to Kashgar was opened for trade In 1886, on the death of Maharaja Ranbir Singh, Kashmir was brought into the Indian States system. Similar was also the case with Sikkim and partially with Bhutan.

On the other hand, Nepal, which in the period between 1814 and 1848 was gravitating towards the position of a protected State, contracted out of it, mainly through the personality and statesmanship of Jung Bahadur Rana who assumed a Shogunate in that country after eliminating his rivals. The value attached by the Army authorities to Gurkha recruitment, and the virtual isolation of Nepal from any international sphere of activity, helped that State to maintain and develop its independent status.

With the establishment of Abdur Rahman at Kabul, and his success in maintaining his freedom of action, the necessity of settling the boundary area became important, and new territorial States, which were originally tribal chiefships, came into existence. Of

these, the most important were Chitral, Swat and Dir. Baluchistan came late into the Indian system early in the twentieth century, and the Khan of Kalat, as the ruler of non-British Baluchistan was styled, was the latest, and probably the last addition, to the Indian political system.

There is one further fact which is significant in relation to political geography. The position of the Orissa States was doubtful at the beginning of the period. Till the decision in Keshab Mahajan's case in 1878 these States were considered as being subject to British jurisdiction. The Privy Council decided in that case that the Ruler of Mayurbhanj was not a *Zamindar* but a Ruling Prince, and this decision governed the status of the Rulers of Orissa.

The period immediately following the Mutiny was one of internal decay in Indian States. The process had started earlier and had been noticed and commented upon by such political observers as Sleeman. The *Times* described the condition of affairs in the period immediately preceding the Mutiny as follows: "Our hand of iron maintains them on the throne, despite their imbecility, their vices and their crimes. The result is, in most of the States, a chronic anarchy under which the revenues of the States are dissipated between the mercenaries of the camp and the minions of the Court". The genius of individual administrators provided a few notable exceptions. Salar Jang laid the foundations of Hyderabad's future greatness on the chaos left to him by Chandulal. Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao provided Travancore with a modern system of government which, under the inspiring genius of Ayilyam Maharaja, was to make it a model State. Others also there were, —Jayaji Rao Sindhia, Maharaja Narendra Singh of Patiala, Sir Dinkar Rao and Dewan Sankunni Menon,—to mention only a few. But it may well be said that the period between the Mutiny and the trial of Malhar Rao Gaekwar in 1875 witnessed a process of decay in the States from which only their inherent strength enabled them to recover.

This period also saw the elaboration of the theory of "one charge". The main centres of India were connected by railways, and their alignment took the shortest route, and gave no consideration to political boundaries. Though many States were allowed to maintain their own posts, in all but four (Gwalior, Patiala, Nabha and Jind) the Imperial Post Office functioned as in the rest of India. The Imperial Telegraph system extended to every State, and only one, Kashmir, (owing to its late incorporation in the polity of India) was allowed to run a parallel system. The British Indian rupee came at the same time to possess a pre-eminence even where local

coinage continued to exist, as it did in many States, but the monetary policy of India became the sole concern of the Central Government.

Alongside with the material framework of a unified India, which was being created within this period, the moral forces were also working. The great Universities of the Presidency towns became the centres of learning, to which educational institutions in the States began to be affiliated. The great codes. which were promulgated in India, and the High Courts which were established, became the model and type of legislation and judicial system for the States, providing a similarity of form, if not of standards, for judicial administration. By a slow process, mainly during minorities and regencies. the framework of British Indian revenue administration was introduced into even backward areas.

The doctrine of "one charge" also gave rise to a new sense of responsibility, so far as the Central Government was concerned In a minute of 1360 Lord Canning stated that it was the right of the Government of India to set right abuses in a native government. In a speech at Ajmer Lord Mayo told the Princes of Rajputana: "We estimate you not by the splendour of your offerings to us, nor by the pomp of your retinue here, but by your conduct to your own people at home If we respect your rights and privileges, you should also respect the rights and privileges of those who are placed beneath your care If we support you in your power, we expect in return good government" In the Alwar case, where an administration was set up after the depositon of the ruler, Lord Mayo enunciated the principles of his policy towards Princes and States as follows: "I believe. if in any feudatory State in India oppression, tyranny, corruption, wastefulness and vice are found to be the leading characteristics of its administration. it is the imperative duty of the paramount power to interfere, and that we evade the responsibility which our position in India imposes on us, and avoid the discharge of a manifest duty, if we allow the people of any race or class to be plundered and oppressed. On the other hand, I am equally of opinion that, should a well disposed Chief, while using his utmost endeavours to establish good government within his State, be opposed by any insubordinate petty baron, mutinous troops or seditious classes of his subjects, it is then our duty to support his authority and power. Further, I believe that under no circumstances can we permit in any State the existence of civil war".

These, he declared, were the three leading features of the policy he was prepared to recommend, and they remained the axioms of political practice till the end of the British rule.

The interest taken by Lord Mayo in the education and upbringing of Princes, which led to the establishment of the Mayo College, is another example of this feeling of responsibility. It will be seen that the foundations of the new policy towards the States, and the full elaboration of the dual system, were laid in the time of Lord Mayo. The theory of intervention was enunciated with clarity, and given effect to in Alwar and Tonk. The desire to introduce bureaucratic methods of administration in the States was emphasized, and Lord Mayo did not conceal his desire to use the opportunities afforded by regencies and minority administrations to introduce radical changes in the prevailing systems in the States. Definite claims of wardship over minor Rulers were put forward. A number of masterful Residents,—Daly, Lepel Griffin, and Aitchison among them,—created a tradition of Residential domination, which evoked from Edward VII during his visit to India, as Prince of Wales, a strong comment on the rude and rough manner of the Political Officers towards the Rulers. Lord Mayo was responsible in a great measure for the policy of nominating to the States, Diwans, chosen by the Political Department, as instruments for carrying out in the States the policy of reforms followed in British India.

The gradual growth of this integral unity was reflected, and received formal expression, in the General Clauses Act (Act I of 1868) which introduced the term British India for the directly administered territories of the Crown and by implication reserved the word India for the whole. The association of prominent personalities from the States in the affairs of the Central Government emphasized this fact. The Maharaja of Patiala was nominated a Member of the Supreme Council. After him, Raja Sir Dinkar Rao and Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao were also honoured in the same manner. The Central Legislature was then considered to be the organ of Indian and not British Indian Government.

The growth of this feeling of Indian unity, and the development of an all-India machinery of administration in matters of common concern, could not be reconciled with the misgovernment and chaos which prevailed in most of the States. The result was the famous trial and deposition of Malhar Rao Gaekwar, the first great landmark in the history of Indian States after the Mutiny. Malhar Rao was an irresponsible despot. No excuse of any kind could be made on his behalf. Misgovernment and oppression in the State reached such proportions that in 1874 the first Baroda Commission was appointed to report on the state of affairs. It reported in February, 1874. On this Lord Northbrook gave the Gaekwar time to put his affairs in order, and enunciated in his letter a theory which is the classic text

of British intervention in States. "My friend", he said, "I cannot consent to employ British troops to protect anyone in course of wrong doing. Misrule on the part of a Government, which is upheld by British power, is misrule for which the British Government becomes in a measure involved. It becomes, therefore, not only the right but the positive duty of the British Government to see that the administration of the State in such a condition is reformed, and that gross abuses are removed".

The sentiment was no doubt unexceptionable; but the extent to which the British Government went to enforce these principles shocked the moral opinion of the Princes and people of India alike. The Gaekwar the premier Hindu Prince and one of the oldest of Britain's Allies, one who claimed suzerainty over many Princes and States, was *arrested.* Not only was his person violated on a flimsy charge for trying to poison the Resident, but he was tried by a special tribunal consisting of three Europeans and three Indians (the Rulers of Gwalior and Jaipur, and Raja Sir Dinkar Rao). The European officials of the Government found the Gaekwar guilty; the three Indian members held otherwise. Malhar Rao was deposed and his own direct descendants excluded from succession. It is worth while to note here that Lord Salisbury officially declared: "His Majesty's Government have willingly accepted the opportunity of recognising in a conspicuous case the paramount obligation which lies upon them of protecting the people of India from oppression".[8]

The decision on the Baroda case laid down the principles of Intervention. "If these obligations (of Rulership) be not fulfilled, *if gross misgovernment be permitted, if substantial justice be not done to the subjects of the Baroda State, if life and property be not protected, or if the general welfare of the country and people be persistently neglected, the British Government will assuredly intervene... ....*" This is the first authoritative statement of the policy of the paramount power in relation to misgovernment in States and its right of intervention in defined cases.

The Baroda case also demonstrated to the rest of India the change in the position of Indian States, that one of the biggest of them, which had helped in the making of the British Empire, had ceased to be an Ally except by courtesy, and that the British Government in India not only claimed, but, in effect, enforced, its authority over the entire country.

That the action against the Gaekwar was high-handed was probably recognized from the beginning, but that it would be an outrage on Indian sentiment was not foreseen. Few in India, whether Princes or others, shared the strange view of the Maharaja Holkar of

the time, who, more or less, encouraged Lord Northbrook in his action, and wrote flattering letters supporting the policy, realizing but little that it was the House of Holkar that was destined to bear the full brunt of this theory during the half a century that was to follow.

The deposition of the Gaekwar and the feeling of uncertainty created in the minds of the Princes as a result had one unexpected consequence. It was felt that something should be done to quieten the alarm of the Princes, and, under the inspiration of Disraeli, the first great *Durbar* was held in Delhi to announce the imperial titles assumed by the Queen. The *Durbar* was meant to be a visible representation of the new unity of India. The title of Empress itself gave no new rights or privileges to the British Crown in relation to the States, *at least legally,* though the mere fact that the great Princes were summoned to do homage from far and near gave a reality to the title which the Princes did not fail to recognize. The official statement that the Princes welcomed the *Durbar* was entirely wrong. The larger States certainly viewed the proposal as a humiliation and feared that the imperial title might involve the revival of Mughul claims in regard to them.

The pomp and show of the *Durbar* was important in its own way, and Lord Lytton, with the imagination of a poet, had suggested many schemes including a Privy Council for India for the purpose of consolidating the unity of the country. But a more important result of the deposition of the Gaekwar was the rendition of Mysore in 1881. The decision had been hanging fire since 1868, when the original Ruler, whose maladministration was the ostensible cause of the introduction of British administration in the State, had passed away. The alarm caused in the minds of the Princes by the action against the Ruler of Baroda and the failure of the Imperial *Durbar* to quieten that alarm, led to a final decision by which Mysore was restored to its legitimate sovereign.

The period from the deposition of the Gaekwar—a landmark in the history of the States—to the departure of Lord Curzon in 1905 may be called the period of stabilization. The process of decay, which was so clearly marked in the first eighteen years after the Mutiny, had been arrested. The next quarter of a century witnessed a marked and notable revival in the authority, prestige and efficiency of State administrations. No doubt this was to some extent due to the policy of Lord Mayo bearing fruit. But to a larger extent it was the result of the inherent resilience of the States themselves The feudal and military organization of the States gave place to the modern conception of centralized administration, to the civil government whose sphere of activity extended to the entire life of

the people, to the State, as an organism with definite functions and obligations. The programme chalked out by Sir T. Madhava Rao in 1879 gives a good indication of what was being attempted by the more enlightened administrators during this period. This is what he laid down: "To maintain public order and tranquillity with firmness and moderation: to establish a proper and sufficient machinery for the dispensation of justice: to provide a police: to provide for useful public works: to promote public education: to provide suitable medical agencies: to reduce the burden of taxation: to enforce economy in expenditure: to greatly strengthen executive establishments, so that government may pervade and be coextensive with the country and population, and may make itself felt throughout these dominions". In short, to create a modern administration.

The birth pangs of this system were severe in some areas where the authority of Central Government had been traditionally weak, and the Thakurs and nobles exercised powers in their own *Jagirs*. Alwar and Bikaner provided examples of the resistance of the nobles to the change, but, even in Rajputana, where the strength of the semi-feudal baronage was rooted in history, the modern State, with its totalitarian claims, came definitely into being.

In less backward areas the process of stabilization was even more marked. Sir T. Madhava Rao, who was the head of the Regency set up after the deposition of Malhar Rao, laid the firm foundations of modern administration in Baroda, on which Maharaja Sayaji Rao Gaekwar was able to build with outstanding results. The earlier activity of Madhava Rao in the same direction bore fruit in the progressive and reforming administration of Ayilym Maharaja who may justly be called the founder of modern Travancore. After Travancore Madhava Rao turned his attention to Indore, where also the foundations he laid stood the test of the two successive eras of maladministration leading to the deposition of Rulers. The genius of Seshadri Iyer made Mysore the model State that it continued to be till the last. A band of lesser known personalities carried on the good work in other States.

One notable feature of this period was the emergence of outstanding personalities among the Rulers themselves. Sayaji Rao III of Baroda may be said to have epitomized in his person the strength and limitations of the conception of the Patriot King as applied to the conditions of Indian States. A wise and far-seeing Ruler, a genuine liberal in the Benthamite tradition, an ardent social reformer, and one with a proper appreciation of the importance of science and industry in modern life, and, above all, with a clear understanding of the integral unity of the States with India, Maharaja Sayaji Rao

was undoubtedly one of the greatest Indians of his day. In massiveness and range, his achievements over a period of half a century of active administration were truly remarkable. The weakness consisted in the personal character of the rule, and the dependence of the whole process of reform on the personality of the Ruler.

One other fact remains to be noticed, and that is the reorganization of the forces maintained by the States. The existence of the armies in Indian States was an eyesore to the Government of India. Lord Napier had reported in a despatch in 1870: "There are considerable forces under native chiefs, who may be individually friendly but whose troops can never be relied on not to join against us. Our military force at Gwalior is much inferior in strength to that which Scindia could bring against it...... .... We are aware that the Deccan, Central India and the Border States of Rajputana, such as Kerowlee and Kotah, could furnish larger bodies of men than those which gave such ample occupation to General Stewart's, and, afterwards, Sir Hugh Rose's and Sir John Mitchell's forces". The military authorities had never forgotten the fact that Tantia Topi had received his reinforcements by the wholesale desertion of troops in certain Indian States. But though suspicion was strong, no definite policy was attempted till the time of Lord Dufferin. It was Dufferin who saw the possibility of developing the military resources of the States for Imperial purposes. He asked the States, which had "specially good fighting material in their armies, to raise a portion of those armies to such a pitch of general efficiency as will make them fit to go into action side by side with Imperial Troops". It was, however, only in 1889 that effective steps were taken to organize the Imperial Service Troops. The principles underlying the scheme were that the maintenance of these forces would be on an entirely voluntary basis, that the troops would be recruited from the people of the States, and they would be officered by Indians.

The organization of the Imperial Service Troops was an event of notable importance. It was in the first place clear evidence of the fact that the Central Government had come to the conclusion that the existence of State armies did not any longer constitute a danger. Secondly, it was a further manifestation of the growing unity of India that a portion of the troops of the States should be earmarked for the defence of the motherland. It should perhaps be added that some of the leading States like Baroda, Travancore, Indore and Rewa considered this at the time as an attack on their independence, and kept out of the scheme altogether.

The theory of "one charge", of India as a single conception, was thus making practical headway all the time. But the legal justifica-

tion of this theory did not keep pace with the practice. Certain unfortunate events in the far off State of Manipur provided the necessary opportunity for a further elaboration of principles. The facts of the Manipur case have been stated above.[9] Two brothers of the Maharaja rose in rebellion and installed the Jubaraj on the Gadi. The Central Government recognized the new Ruler, but demanded that another brother, who was suspected by them to be the principal leader of the revolt, should be expelled. On failure to take immediate action, the British troops attacked the Manipur palace; some British officers were murdered; a British force entered the territory, deposed the Jubaraj, and sentenced him, his brother, and others to be hanged. But the importance of the case lies not in punishing an heir apparent who had been recognized as the Ruler, but in the claim put forward in the Proclamation that, in obeying the constituted authority of a State, the subjects of that State were committing rebellion. The subjects of the States were thereby held to have a direct allegiance to the Paramount Power.

The Manipur case differs from the Baroda case in one important respect. In the Baroda case it was the obligation of the Ruler towards *his people* that was emphasized, and the right of the Paramount Power to take political action against a Ruler who failed in that duty was sought to be established. In the Manipur case, it was carried a step further, and the overriding loyalty of the subjects of the State to the Paramount Power was insisted upon.

The apogee of the Imperial theory was reached in the time of Lord Curzon, whose Viceroyalty (1898-1905) may be regarded as the culmination of the claims of imperialism. Lord Curzon's general theory was that the Princes were merely the agents of the Crown in the administration of their territory, and that they had no inherent rights of their own. "The *sovereignty* of the Crown is everywhere unchallenged It has itself laid down the limitations of its own prerogative",[10] declared the Viceroy, at the installation of the Nawab of Bahawalpur. From allies the Princes had been reduced, at least according to the theory of Lord Curzon, to the position of hereditary officers. It was the theory of indirect government in its nakedness. Lord Curzon's attitude was reflected in many matters The Princes were asked not to use red liveries. They were not to leave their States without permission—ticket of leave, as one Prince called it. The phraseology used in regard to them was scrutinized with a view to bringing home to them their subordinate position. The interference of the Residents and Political Officers reached such a pitch that one well-meaning and otherwise sympathetic Resident wrote to a Ruler that he (Resident) considered that he was not worth his salt if he did not interfere in whatever matter he considered fit

The result of all this was a great unrest among the Princes themselves. Maharaja Sayaji Rao III of Baroda, whose administrative and political reforms in his own State had earned for him the admiration of the whole of India, became the spear-head of resistance to Lord Curzon's policy. Other Rulers of outstanding ability were also making their mark at this time,—Maharaja Madhava Rao Sindhia of Gwalior, Maharaja Krishna Raya III of Mysore, and Maharaja Ganga Singh of Bikaner. Further, the growth of a strong nationalist movement in India also had its repercussion on the States in so far as the British Government was forced to turn to the Princes again for support.

This period also witnessed the introduction of popular institutions in the States. In Mysore, a representative assembly was established, and in Travancore, a legislative council—cautious steps in the beginning but indicative of a desire to associate the people with the Government. Municipal Boards and village *panchayats* also began to function practically at the same time.[10a]

III. ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS IN INDIAN STATES:

1 *The Indian States in the new set-up:*

Their Diversity and Uniformity.

The British as the paramount power introduced a new political system by making settlement with individual States which enforced subordinate co-operation, allegiance and loyalty on all the Indian States, both large and small, and each of them was politically isolated. So far as material conditions were concerned, generally speaking, the States were now set on the path of peace, progress and prosperity. But the very nature of the new political settlement brought with it definite limitations on the scope and extent of the internal polity of each of the States. With the crystallization of the fluid contemporary political conditions prevalent at the time of the settlement, many new problems arose. The new political conditions brought about a major cultural crisis in the Indian States. The prevalent administrative systems of the States, left undisturbed, could not possibly meet the requirement of the changed times. They were queer mixture of more than one system, and these too were completely dislocated owing to the prolonged anarchy and political instability that preceded the settlement. The States, therefore, could not possibly expect to survive unless their administrations were reorganized on completely different lines. The Indian Princes and their subjects at first looked upon the institutions and ideas of the British with distrust and suspicion. But now that the British were supreme in India, their western ideals and culture successfully effected slow

but steady penetration into the obdurate crust of the oriental obstinacy and the proverbial conservatism of the East. The progress and development of the new administrative system and the popular political institutions based on the Western ideals could not possibly be either simultaneous or uniform in the different States. The geographical situation of the numerous far-flung States and the varying stages of the political, social and cultural development of their people were vital factors. The economic conditions, too, greatly affected the nature and the pace of these reforms. The States, with their finances seriously disorganized or heavily burdened with large cash contributions, and very small States, with scanty income and very limited resources, could not possibly think of administrative or political reforms for a long time to come. Finally, the political isolation of each State, coupled with the policy of non-intervention, contributed in no small degree to this lack of uniformity in administrative and political developmen of the different States.

There was, however, one factor which to a large extent counteracted against or neutralized these tendencies. Amid the diversity prevailing in the States, the British Government provided the only unifying factor. All the States looked up to it for advice and guidance in matters of administrative as well as political reforms. Thus measures introduced in British Indian provinces were more or less faithfully copied with necessary modifications and duly adopted by the Indian States. This was facilitated by the spread of the English education and the western ideas, which placed at the disposal of the Indian States a new set of administrators who could introduce and carry out these reforms. Again, though the British Government professed the policy of strict non-intervention, they modified it in more ways than one. The authority and interference of the Resident-Ministers of the Company at the Indian Courts gradually increased, and thus there arose the 'political practice' which effectively modified the original treaties and engagements, and brought about the necessary uniformity in the pattern of the administrative reforms and political evolution in the Indian States. Later, as a result of 'subordinate union', the States became "an integral factor in the imperial organization in India", which merely strengthened the forces bringing about uniformity in their administrations.

2. *The years of Settlement and early Reforms (1818-1857).*

The forty years immediately following the pacification effected by the Marquess of Hastings were years of settlement. There were still left many outstanding issues and tentative arrangements to be finalized. A series of new problems arose as each treaty was put into practice. The system of mediation and guarantees was ano-

ther source of fresh troubles and more intricacies. The payment to the British Government for the maintenance of the subsidiary contingents was one of the most important questions. Lean finances of the impoverished States could not bear this heavy burden and there was a complete breakdown of their financial administrative system. Time and again fresh arrangements had to be made for the clearing of past arrears along with the regular payment of sums annually due under the provisions of the original treaty. The Hyderabad State, as noted above,[11] had, therefore, to permanently cede the districts of Berar in 1853. The situation in Baroda was by no means better, and the Governor of Bombay had to temporarily sequester more than once some districts of the Gaekwad's territories. Similarly, all the good work done by Col. James Tod in Mewar was undone on his departure, and the Court of Directors had to order in 1833 that sufficient security be required from the Maharana. Practically all the States, big and small, had to face similar financial troubles There were also serious administrative difficulties in the States, as there was a real dearth of able administrators at this time. Internal disorders were a rule rather than an exception in the States. The subjugation of the feudal nobles presented a real problem in many of the Rajputana States.

Questions of successions and adoptions led to the formation of hostile groups and parties and the fomentation of endless intrigues in the States concerned Regular administration virtually broke down in many of the States, while in many others some form of administration existed more or less only in name.

In cases of States, which had 'by particular engagements rendered themselves professedly feudatory', the British Government exercised its supremacy. Thus in Travancore the interference of the Political Agents stationed there extended even to matters of minute details of internal administration. In Mysore State, as noted above,[12] Lord Bentinck intervened in 1830-1, deprived the Maharaja of ruling powers, and entrusted the administration of the State to the British Commissioners specially appointed by the British Government for this purpose. In Kolhapur, too, taking advantage of the relevant provision in the treaty, the British Government appointed first a minister, and later a British officer as its Political Superintendent.[13]

The policy adopted in respect of the other States was to hold them 'as vassals in substance, though not in name;.....possessed of perfect internal sovereignty'. Hence the British Government refused to intervene in cases of disputed successions, Bharatpur being the only exception.[13a] Matters of social reforms were enforced in the

States only by means of special agreements. The British Government felt no concern in the administration of all these States except in so far as it touched their own interests. But they felt no scruple even in coercing the rulers to appoint as ministers persons who agreed to be their subservient tools when it suited their interests to do so.[14]

This policy as well as the demoralization of the ruler and his court, which was an almost inevitable consequence of the system of Subsidiary Alliance, worked havoc in the Indian States. Many of the States, including those which were once most powerful, were reduced to the most abject condition, and anarchy and disaffection prevailed throughout their dominions. The history of the Nizam, Sindhia, Gaekwad, Holkar, and many others during this period bears testimony to this fact. The Subsidiary Force, the presence of the Resident, and the guarantee of the Ruler's possessions against external aggression, had combined to undermine the initiative and responsibility of Rulers and sap the foundations of social well-being in the States. There was, besides, the well-grounded fear that the display of ability, honesty and energy on the part of a ruler was sure to put him in the black list of the Government of India.[16] No wonder that the old edifice of administration, reared up through centuries to suit the peculiar conditions of the States, was visibly crumbling down to ruins.

The administration of the States was mainly military in character. The progressive anarchy of the 18th century had broken down the traditional respect for government and the automatic obedience to the law. The collection of the revenue was not possible in the States without a show of military force. 'The chronic warfare and perpetual fluctuations of State limits broke down the custom of paying taxes to one unvarying authority, and taxes themselves came to be a sort of black-mail paid to avoid plunder rather than the regular levies paid as the price of order and protection'. Expenses incurred on the armed forces were heavy, and made civil administration impossible. No importance was attached to Police functions. The administration of justice was rough and ready. There were neither regular laws nor any fixed gradation of courts. There were no proper jails but mere lock-ups where no attention was paid either to their sanitary conditions or to the health and discipline of their inmates. The revenue administration was very primitive and had been completely disorganized. The land-rent was not fixed and was collected in kind. There was no fixity of tenure. Villages were gene-

rally farmed out. There were no regular departments of customs and excise; these revenues used to be farmed out. No attention was paid either to the education or public health of the subjects.

In the meanwhile the British Government had decided that in the event of revolt, misrule, failure of heirs, etc., in the States, their annexation was the only possible method for setting them right. Thus began in 1834 the policy of annexation which was further developed later, and finally completed by the time of Lord Dalhousie.[15a] The future of the States, was, therefore, evidently dark and definitely gloomy. There was, however, slowly appearing a silver lining to these threatening clouds. Mysore State, already under British Administrators, was being re-organized as a British province. During the early forties, taking advantage of the minority administrations, a beginning of well-conducted regular administration under British supervision was made in many important States like Gwalior, Indore and Jaipur Moreover, by now a new set of rulers and administrators was coming up The recovery of the States 'from the almost complete breakdown on their finance and administration was due in no less degree to the energy, ability and farsightedness of a new school of statesmen represented by Salar Jang of Hyderabad, Dinkar Rao of Gwalior and Madhav Rao of Indore, who laid, truly and well, the foundations of modern administration in Indian States'. In 1851 Dinkar Rao was appointed Diwan at Gwalior, while two years later Salar Jang was raised to that high office in Hyderabad. But their good work was suddenly interrupted due to the outbreak of the Mutiny in 1857.

During this period schools were opened in many States and regular study of English language was started. As elsewhere in India, the European missionaries were the pioneers of the English education in the States also, and opened schools in Mysore, Travancore and Hyderabad. Systematic State education did not, however, begin in many of the States till after the famous Wood despatch of 1854. In the States of Northern India everything depended on the State authorities. In Rajputana, schools were opened by the States of Alwar (1842), Jaipur (1845) and Bharatpur (1858). In Malwa, too, through individual efforts, the Sehore school was established in 1839, a school was opened in Indore in 1843, and some were established in the districts of the Gwalior State during the year 1854-5. The Kolhapur State, too, opened four schools in 1848, while in 1853 a beginning was made in Kathiawar with the opening of an English school at Rajkot. It was a modest beginning, but a move in the right direction.

3. *Administrative reorganization of the States and the beginnings of Local Self-government (1858-80)*

In 1858 the Crown assumed the direct government of India and, as noted above, the central control over the States was definitely growing. The work of administrative reorganization of the States, interrupted in 1857, was taken up once again after peace was restored, and much was done in that direction during the next twenty-two years.

In Hyderabad, Salar Jang, who had been appointed the Prime Minister in 1853, continued to hold the supreme power in the State till his untimely death in 1883. Wth remarkable assiduity and uncommon mastery of details he reorganized every part of administration. A revenue survey and settlement was taken in hand and partially completed, regular civil and criminal courts were established, a regular police force was organized for the first time, and the education and medical departments received their due share of attention. Famine-relief measures were first undertaken in 1876. Finally, particular attention was given to the improvement of the finances of the State, which had become greatly involved.

In Rajputana, too, the country was being opened up. Special efforts were made to check dacoities and to put down the unruly nobles. Regular courts of justice and well-managed jails were being established. The criminal and civil laws enacted for British India were being adopted with necessary modifications. Efforts were made to improve land revenue administration and to reduce petty and vexatious cesses. In 1878 the Udaipur State decided to carry out a regular settlement. Schools and hospitals received special attention. Under the able leadership of Maharaja Ram Singh the Jaipur State was progressing most rapidly. A second grade College and a School of Art were established, and a public library and a reading room were opened in Jaipur. Water-works (1875) and gas works (1878) were also started in the Jaipur city.

In Central India, too, things were definitely moving. In Indore, Tukoji Holkar, himself a capable administrator, was ably assisted by his Prime Minister, Sir T. Madhav Rao (1873-75). With its administration reformed and reorganized, Indore became the leading State in Malwa. In Gwalior Dinkar Rao had begun well by introducing radical reforms in every department of the administration, but he could not continue there after 1859, and then not much was done by way of reforms. In other States also close supervision of their administration led to great reforms. A regular survey for settlement purposes was made. The judiciary was being organized and British Indian laws were being adopted with necessary

modifications. Regular police force was being organized and education was fostered. A medical school in connection with the Indore Residency Charitable Hospital was started in 1878.

In Kathiawar the Princes and Chiefs were divided into seven classes and their individual powers and jurisdictions were finally defined in 1863. Outlawry was suppressed and courts of justice were reformed. Education was fostered and a few State dispensaries were opened. Famine-relief works were undertaken there for the first time in 1877.

Meanwhile the administration of Mysore was being brought into line with the Regulation Provinces by Bowring, the Commissioner for Mysore (1862-70). The State was re-divided into new divisions and districts. Revenue survey and settlement was carried out. A scheme for the education of the masses was put into practice, and the Central College was opened at Bangalore in 1875. Similarly, during fourteen years (1858-1872) of his *diwanship*, Sir T. Madhav Rao had done much to reform the already well-organized administration of Travancore State. Monopolies were abolished, British Indian laws were adopted, and the Courts were reorganized on British Indian model. Land tax was reduced, past arrears were wiped out, and vexatious taxes were abolished. A department of vernacular education was established in 1865. The public debt of the State was completely paid off.

Of all the major States, Baroda was still lagging behind. Khande Rao Gaekwad (1856-70) began his reign with a real desire to better the administration of the State, and, in order to improve land revenue system, commenced a land survey. But his fondness for chase, jewels, display and buildings left him no money to spend on useful public works. In 1870, when he was succeeded by his brother, Malhar Rao, the situation worsened still further and the administration rapidly deteriorated. Malhar Rao was, however, deposed and deported from Baroda in 1875.[16] As Sayaji Rao III was then only thirteen years of age, the administration was conducted by Sir T. Madhav Rao as the Diwan-Regent during the minority of the ruler (1875-1882), and it marks the beginning of a new era in the history of that State. The entire administration was now being reorganized on the model of British Indian Provinces. The finances were restored to a healthy condition, and efficient revenue system was introduced, vexatious taxes were swept away, and judiciary was reorganized with proper gradation of powers. Police administration was completely overhauled. Magisterial and police functions were separated, and a clear line of demarcation was drawn between the

army and the police. The department of public instruction was opened in 1875 and a year later the medical department was started.

There was also a beginning of local self-government in the Indian States. In 1862 a municipal committee was constituted at Bangalore as an experimental measure, and was later followed by more municipalities at the district and *Taluk* head-quarters, their number finally rising to 83 in 1881. Jaipur and Indore States established municipalities in their capitals in 1868. A year later municipal administration was introduced in Hyderabad city and its suburbs also. Finally, in 1877 municipalities were established in all towns of the Baroda State containing a population of 10,000 people and over, excepting Dwarka. But all the members of all these municipalities were nominated, though non-officials too were included among them. Local self-government, in its strict sense, was nowhere introduced save in Mysore. The municipalities were no more than local committees dealing with lighting and sanitation, while in some cases, these were entirely managed by the State

4. *Administrative Reforms and Local Self-government (1881-1905)*

The year 1881 marks the beginning of a new epoch in the history of the political development of the Indian States. More than one event of outstanding importance took place this year. The ruling powers were restored to the young Maharaja Chama Rajendra Wodeyar of Mysore, and Maharaja Sayaji Rao Gaekwad III was formally *installed and invested with ruling powers* *But the importance of* the year 1881 is mainly due to an event, the real importance and full significance of which were not duly realized then. Soon after assuming the ruling powers the Maharaja of Mysore formed in that State a Representative Assembly, the first popular institution of its kind in any Indian State, to bring the people into immediate association with the Government and thus ensure greater harmony between the actions of the Government and the wishes and interests of the people. This new development in Mysore was destined, in time to come, to materially alter and completely remodel the very conception of kingship in India as was then held in the States. Before proceeding to a detailed study of this new trend, the administrative reforms and further developments in the local self-government movement during the period may be summarily described

a. *Administrative Reforms*

The unique and powerful personality of Sayaji Rao Gaekwad completely dominated this period. He carried on the good work begun by Sir T. Madhav Rao, and infused a new spirit and zeal in the administration of the State. A new survey and settlement was

carried out and a number of unremunerative taxes on the agriculturists were abolished. The judiciary was completely overhauled, and the separation of judiciary from the executive was effected by 1904. The finances of the State were improved. Every possible care was taken in selecting really capable administrators and officers for the State. Educationally, too, Baroda made great progress. The Baroda College and a training college for women teachers were established, and in 1890 the *Kala-Bhavan* was opened for imparting technical education. The Museum was established four years later. An experiment in compulsory free education was started in the Amreli *taluk* in 1893; and this system was extended to other *taluks* also in 1904. Numerous exemptions were, however, allowed to meet the particular local conditions. Socially, too, a definite lead was taken in Baroda by passing the Widow's Remarriage Act and the Infant Marriage Prevention Act, in 1901 and 1904. respectively.

According to the instrument of transfer, the then existing laws, rules and system of administration were to continue in the Mysore State. Further progress was made even after the rendition. The revenue laws were codified after 1886 and agricultural banks were started in 1894. A civil service scheme was adopted in 1891. A scheme for technical education was brought into effect in 1902. The Mysore State now planned for its industrial development, and the Kaveri power schemes were vigorously pursued. In 1905 the Tata Institute (now Indian Institute of Science) was established in Bangalore. Reorganization of its police force in 1880-1 and establishment of a medical school in 1887, were the main achievements of the Travancore State.

In Malwa the period is noteworthy for the general all-round progress made by the Gwalior State during the regency administration (1886-1894) and the rule of Maharaja Madho Rao Sindhia, who took a deep and active interest in the administration. Thus judiciary was reorganized in 1888. Codes based on those of British India were issued in 1895. Fresh survey and settlement was made after 1890. Regular departments of irrigation, forest, customs, and excise were organized. Medical department was first organized in 1887. The police force was brought into line with that of British India in 1903. In other States of Malwa, too, conditions were steadily improving. More schools were now being opened, and in 1891 the Holkar College was started at Indore. Judiciary was also being reorganized and more attention was being paid to the jails and police. A complete reorganization of the Indore State Police was taken up in 1903, with a view to reorganize it on the lines of that in British India.

Finally, relief measures were undertaken for the first time in Central India during the famines of 1896-7 and 1899-1900.

In Rajputana the period is marked by general improvement in administrative systems of all the States. Regular survey was carried out and settlement was made in majority of these States on the lines of British India. Efforts were continued to foster the increase of education and medical relief throughout Rajputana. Jails were improved and police was being organized into a regular independent force. Definite laws were introduced and judiciary was being improved. The most noteworthy thing of this period was the rapid reorganization and the rise into importance of the two major Rathore States of Jodhpur and Bikaner. After long periods of weak and inefficient rule in Jodhpur the administration of Maharaja Jaswant Singh (1873-1895) was distinguished by the vigour and success with which dacoities and crimes of violence were suppressed, by pushing on the construction of railways and irrigation works, improving the customs tariff, undertaking a regular revenue settlement including introduction of cash payments in the *Khalsa* areas, and finally by the establishment of Jaswant College at Jodhpur in 1894. Particular attention was paid to the opening of hospitals and affording medical relief to the people.

Bikaner, too, had been quite backward and unorganized till 1887 when the minor Maharaja Ganga Singh was installed on the *gadi*. The few reforms effected by his predecessor, Dungar Singh, had been shortlived, and the affairs had gradually relapsed into confusion after 1883. The Council of Regency (1887-1898) thoroughly overhauled the entire administration and reorganized State finances on sound lines. Ghaggar canals were constructed. A regular land settlement was made for the first time On getting his powers Maharaja Ganga Singh took an active part and personal interest in the famine-relief operations of 1899-1900, and in 1903 he set about to reorganize a properly co-ordinated and efficient secretariat to meet the demands of a new age Then followed a series of important reforms to improve the condition of the *ryots*

b. *Local Self-government*

The efforts to extend local self-government in the States were continued. Progress of the municipalities in Mysore was duly maintained, and their number rapidly increased. In 1892 the system of electing some non-official members was introduced. The system of municipal taxation and finances was revised, and new sources of municipal income were allotted to these bodies.

The conditions in other States were not so advanced. In Hyderabad State more Municipal Committees or local boards were

established, but no real advance was made and the members were still being nominated. In Travancore State a start was made only in 1900, when an enactment, framed on the lines of the Municipal Acts of British India, was passed. In Malwa the municipal self-government was still not common. The Gwalior State made a beginning by establishing a municipal board in Gwalior in 1887, and by 1905 as many as 48 of its members were being elected out of a total of 80. More municipalities were opened by the Gwalior and Indore States in populous towns. Regular municipalities or town committees were constituted in Bhopal, Ratlam and a few other large towns also. In Rajputana municipal committees had been established at Jodhpur and Bikaner in 1884 and 1889, respectively But Rajputana still did not contain any municipality in the true sense of the term, enjoying the corporate privileges of local self-government, and all the members were still being nominated

The conditions in the Baroda State, had, however, rapidly progressed. The Maharaja was most anxious to preserve as much of the ancient self-government in the villages as was possible. He sanctioned in 1892 a municipal scheme embodying principles of election, but it was not until 1904 that the Local Self-government Act was passed, which set up boards in every district and sub-district in the State. There, too, the elective principle was introduced.

c *The Beginnings of Democracy in the Indian States*

Gradual changes in the system of government in British India in order to bring about increasing association of the Indians with the business of legislation were, as mentioned above,[17] made by the Indian Councils Acts of 1861 and 1892, the last of which adopted the elective principle in the formation of Indian legislatures. The position was radically different in Indian States, where there was no foreign rule in the strict sense of the term. Hence any political development there, on similar lines, was to mean merely the beginning of the association of the people, first with the legislation and finally with the administration itself, with a view to its ultimate development into real responsible government in the State, the Ruler becoming its constitutional head. But without a careful analysis of these differing political conditions, the Indian States merely went on to reproduce the pattern as laid out by the British Government from time to time for the Indian Legislative Council established at Calcutta. The Mysore Representative Assembly was the one rare exception of a different design, but it was more or less only an organized annual public *durbar*, and not a legislature of the same sort till 1923 when it was given a statutory basis. This Representative Assembly of Mysore met once a year at Mysore at the time of

the Dashera festival. The Diwan made his annual statement on the condition of the finances and the measures of the State, after which suggestions by members were considered. The Assembly consisted mainly of "the representative landholders and merchants from all parts of the State". In 1891 the privilege of election was conceded to higher landed interests and the graduates of the Indian Universities residing in the *taluks*, and the number of representatives for each *taluk* was fixed. Time and again attempts were made by members that votes be taken, but this right was not conceded by the Government. The Assembly owed its origin to an executive order of the Government, and this continued till 1923, when major constitutional changes were introduced in this State.

In Hyderabad the move for the asociation of the people with legislative work was first made when the Council of State, composed of the principal nobles, with the Nizam as President, became a Legislative Council also. But this arrangement did not meet with much success, and hence in 1893 orders were promulgated for the establishment of a regular Legislative Council for making laws for the State. It was to consist of the Chief Justice, a puisne judge of the High Court, the Inspector-General of Revenue, the Director of Public Instruction, the Inspector-General of Police and Financial Secretary. But by an Act passed in the following year (1894), the Nizam recognized the right of the people to a share in the work of framing laws and to representation. In 1900 this regulation of 1894 was re-enacted with certain modifications, which remained in force for many decades. The Legislative Council, thus constituted, consisted of 19 members of whom, besides the President and Vice-President, 11 were official and 6 non-official members. The Minister was the President, and the Assistant Minister, whose department was concerned with the bill before the Council, was the Vice-President for the time being. Of the 6 non-official members, 2 were elected by the Jagirdars and land-owners, 2 by the pleaders of the High Court, and the remaining 2 were nominated by the Minister from among the residents of the States, of whom one was to be nominated from the *Paigah ilaqa*. The non-official members were appointed for two years, but retiring members were eligible for re-election. Bills, with the statements of objects and reasons, were published in the State Gazette in various vernaculars for eliciting public opinion.

The Travancore State, however, proved to be the most progressive; its plan for introducing popular institutions was very systematic, and real powers were given to these bodies. Its Legislative Council was brought into existence in 1888, the Ruler's right of direct legislation independently of the Council remaining unimpaired. The

Council had a minimum of five members and a maximum of eight, of whom not less than two were to be non-officials, nominated by the Government. The Diwan or, in his absence, the senior official member present presided over its deliberations. The Council was a purely deliberative body for purposes of legislation and had no administrative functions. But it had plenary powers of legislation, subject to the ruler's assent before any measure could pass into laws. Previous sanction of the Diwan was necessary before any measure, either affecting the public revenues of the State or imposing any charge on them, could be introduced in the Council. Provision was also made for inviting public opinion in respect of particular bills before the same were passed by the Council. The Council was enlarged in 1898, the minimum number of members being 8 and maximum 15, the proportion of non-officials being fixed at not less than two-fifths of the total number. The Diwan was given powers to arrange, with the previous sanction of the Ruler, for the introduction of elective principle in the selection of the non-official members of the Council. The jurisdiction of the Council was precisely defined, and it was not allowed to entertain any measures affecting the ruling family or its relations with the Paramount Power.

A further advance was made in 1904, when a representative assembly, known as the 'Shri Mulam Popular Assembly', was formed with the object of enabling the people of the State to express their wants and wishes, and represent their views on administrative measures directly to the Government. The members of the Assembly were at first nominated by the State from among the agricultural, trading, industrial and other classes, but from the second year the privilege of electing members to the Assembly was granted to the people themselves. Out of a total of 70 members, 42 members were elected from 35 *taluks* of the State. The Government nominated the remaining members out of which 14 were to be non-officials. The Diwan was the President of the Assembly. The next instalment of reforms followed only in 1919.

The reforms carried out in some of the States, as noted above, should not be taken to mean a general state of improved system of administration in Indian States in the nineteenth century. The picture of wholesome progress indicated by the reforms, though justified, at least partially, in the case of a few of the more advanced, was unfortunately not quite true in regard to the vast majority of the Indian States. The old and outmoded Medieval system more or less still prevailed in them. The rulers of all the States, big or small, were full-fledged autocrats without any real restraint on their power of oppressing the people. The rule of law which gave protection and security of life and property to every individual subject in British

India, so far at least as the relation between one Indian and another was concerned, was *in practice* altogether absent in the Indian States. The personal wish or caprice of these autocratic rulers was unchecked by any rule or convention, and serious allegations have often been publicly made against them of inflicting unmerited insults and injuries upon all classes of people and even of dishonouring women. Not a few of these autocratic rulers were licentious in the extreme and led a life of luxury and debauchery at the cost of their subjects. Some of them lavished their wealth on fast women and slow horses, while others indulged in crude extravagant habits of the most frivolous type. All this should not be ignored in making a proper assessment of the Indian States [17a]

IV. SOME INDIVIDUAL STATES

1. *Hyderabad.*

As has been mentioned in the preceding volume, the Nizam of Hyderabad accepted the Subsidiary Alliance in 1798, and his relations with the British were further regulated by the Treaty of 1800 Henceforth the chief interest of the history of Hyderabad lies in the nature of the British control exercised over this State. The question whether the British Government should interfere with the internal administration of the State came to the fore in 1808. Mir Alam, the Nizam's able Minister and a sincere friend of the British Government, died in 1808. The two principal competitors for the vacant post were Munir-ul-Mulk (son-in-law of Mir Alam) and Shams-ul-Umara (chief of the military party in the State). The Nizam sought the advice of Lord Minto who recommended the appointment of Shams-ul-Umara The Nizam selected Munir-ul-Mulk but, in order to avoid giving offence to the British Government, made Munir-ul-Mulk enter into an agreement that the affairs of the State should be conducted through the agency of one Chandu Lal (a staunch supporter of British interests). This was an arrangement satisfactory to both the parties—the Nizam and the British Government.

During the rule of Sikandar Jah (1803-1829) the British Government interfered a great deal in the internal administration of Hyderabad. There was maladministration. The revenues of the State were farmed to contractors, who were practically supreme in their several districts. In consequence, the grossest oppression prevailed, and the disciplined force under British officers was repeatedly called out to repress local rebellion. The country was infested with robber bands. In order to restore law and order British officers were employed in

different districts. They settled the amount of revenue to be levied, and under their administration the country soon improved.

When Nasir-ud-daula succeeded Sikandar Jah in 1829, he requested the British Government that the direct interference of British officers in the administration should be discontinued. He was assured that provided revenue settlements made by the British officers were maintained for the full period of their currency, the British Government would withdraw from all interference, and the Nizam would be absolute both in the selection and removal of his minister, and in all other matters of internal administration.[18] The withdrawal of interference was carried out on these conditions.

A fresh cause of dispute arose regarding the payment of the Hyderabad Contingent. By the Treaty of 1800, the Nizam had agreed to supplement the Subsidiary Force by 6,000 infantry and 9,000 horse of his own troops. He had further agreed to use every effort to bring the whole force of his dominions into the field as speedily as possible. The Nizam's force, however, was not very efficient and when in 1813 one of the corps mutinied, two regiments of reformed troops were raised and they were armed and equipped like the Company's troops. Due to financial difficulties the Nizam was obliged to borrow funds from the Company for payment of the Contingent. In 1853 the debt had risen to upwards of Rs. 45 lakhs. How Lord Dalhousie, taking advantage of this, coerced the Nizam to conclude a new treaty has been mentioned above.[19] By the treaty of 21 May, 1853, Lord Dalhousie made a final settlement of the liability of the Hyderabad State towards Imperial defence. The strength and duties of the Subsidiary Force were set forth, and as an auxiliary force, the "Hyderabad Contingent" was constituted. It was to consist of not less than 5,000 infantry, 2,000 cavalry, and four field batteries of artillery. It was to be commanded by British officers, fully equipped and disciplined and controlled by the British Government through its representative, the Resident at Hyderabad. The services of the Contingent in time of peace were detailed, and in the event of war the Subsidiary Force, joined by the Contingent, was to be employed as the British Government might think fit, provided that two battalions of Sepoys were left near the capital of Hyderabad. Then followed the special agreement that 'excepting the said Subsidiary and Contingent Forces, His Highness shall not, under any circumstances, be called upon to furnish any other troops whatsoever'.[20] Thus this treaty is of considerable importance, as it finally fixed the military liabilities of Hyderabad. The Contingent ceased to be part of Nizam's army and became an auxiliary force kept up by the British Government for the Nizam's use.

In order to provide for the payment of this force, and for certain pensions and interest on the debt, the Nizam assigned certain territories called the Assigned Districts in Berar which were estimated to yield a gross revenue of fifty lakhs of rupees. It was also agreed that accounts should be annually rendered to the Nizam, and that any surplus revenue which might accrue should be paid to him. Nothing contributed so much to the later strained relations between the Nizam and the British Government as this arrangement regarding the Assigned Districts in Berar. The provisions of the treaty of 1853 which required the submission of annual accounts of the Assigned Districts to the Nizam were productive of inconvenience and embarrassing discussions. As a reward for the loyalty of the Nizam during the Mutiny of 1857 a new treaty was made in December, 1860. By this the debt of Rs. 50 lakhs due by the Nizam was cancelled and certain territories were restored to him. The Nizam agreed that the Assigned Districts in Berar should be held in trust by the British Government for the purposes specified in the treaty of 1853, but that no demand for accounts of the receipts or expenditure of the districts should be made.[21]

The relations of the British Government with the Nizam did not suffer any change after the assumption of the Government of India by the British Crown It can be understood if we bear in mind the principles explained by Sir Henry Maine in his minute dated 22 March, 1864·—"The mode or degree in which sovereignty is distributed between the British Government and any given Native State is always a question of fact, which has to be separately decided in each case, and to which no general rules apply". On account of its size, resources and historic position, the Hyderabad State enjoyed a fairly large amount of independence. Thus Sir George Yule, the Resident at Hyderabad, explained in his letter to the Viceroy·—"There is but one mode of securing an efficient administration here, and that by an able, honest, and powerful Minister, governing in the name of his master, but according to his own views modified, so far as may be, by the advice of the Resident. The Resident must be and must appear to be, an adviser, except in case of emergency such as this; if it is otherwise, if the Resident forces on the Minister his own views as to measures, or interferes in details, he takes away responsibility from the Minister, lowers his self-respect and his influence with the people, and the measures he enforces are never carried out practically".[22] But in actual practice the Political Department was all-powerful. Its influence was all-pervasive. The Nizam enjoyed only 'limited sovereignty'. A careful study of the official records of the Government of India shows that it was

as true of Hyderabad as of other States that "the whisper of the Residency is the thunder of the State". This may be illustrated by a few concrete examples.

1. The Nizam had not full powers of selecting and dismissing his ministers. In 1867, when the differences between the Nizam and his Minister, Sir Salar Jang, became acute, and the latter resigned from his office, the Viceroy wrote in his *Khureeta* to the Nizam, dated 4 April, 1867:[23] "The British Government regard with high satisfaction the many and great reforms which under Your Highness's Government have been introduced into every department of the administration. But if Your Highness were to dispense with the aid of Salar Jang, and if (as I am assured Your Highness is yourself so persuaded) there were no one else at the present moment qualified efficiently to supply his place, then without doubt the country would relapse into the state of misrule and confusion, from which it has so recently been rescued, and however reluctant, the British Government (whose surrounding districts would suffer from disorder in Hyderabad) might be forced to interpose its authority in a manner that could not but be highly distasteful to Your Highness. The British Government deprecate equally with Your Highness any such contingency. And therefore, my friend, I counsel you to give a full and hearty confidence to your wise and faithful Minister: and henceforth to avoid any action which would detract from his authority in the eyes of Your Higness's subjects and tend to weaken his administration". The result of this veiled threat of interference was that Sir Salar Jang was reinstated in his former office

2 In 1866 the Government of India invited the opinion of the Residents of the various States on the rules for enforcing the responsibility of Native States for mail robberies committed within their territories by the infliction of fines—the minimum penalty being Rs 500 or Rs 500 over and above the value of the property plundered Mr. G. U. Yule, the Resident at Hyderabad, expressed his opinion that the infliction of a fine upon the Hyderabad State because of the occurrence of a mail robbery would be degrading to it, and felt deeply to be so, while as a preventive measure it would not have any effect. "We dare not inflict fines that would be felt The world would cry out against extortion. We dare only levy petty fines, the very pettiness of which adds to the degradation". Mr. Yule was definitely of the opinion that the suggestion to levy fines would not lead to any improvement. "If we wish improvement in a State, we cannot get it by forcing on measures which neither the Ruler, nor his Minister nor his People understand to be improvement: we must carry

some one of the three with us, and we can do so only by convincing them that we advocate it because we believe it to be so and we must make ample allowances for differences in modes of administration. Native States may be excused for not thinking our systems and measures the best possible: and even if they did so think, there are many reasons why they could not carry them out as we are able to do: and, above all, it must not be forgotten that we are often to blame for the inefficiency of the Native Government. Our superiority crushes all life out of the Ruler and his nobles, whose ideas cannot change so fast as their circumstances. We have spurred Native Governments here and whipped them there: but neither whipping nor spurring ever put a horse in condition, and we have always been trying to get money, or land, or power of some kind from them. We must, therefore, in justice, make allowances if their administrative arrangements are not so good as ours, and we cannot stop mail robberies in our own territories".[24] In spite of this weighty protest, the Government enforced the regulations in Hyderabad.

3. In 1867 the Government of India laid down general instructions for the guidance of British representatives in Native States:—"There is, I am to remark, no more important part of Political Officers' functions than to keep a watchful eye on the military organization of the State to which he is accredited, with a view to quietly checking and promptly reporting to his Government, any instance of excessive armament. Frequent examples might be quoted of the proper fulfilment of this obligation in the States of Hyderabad, Gwalior, Bhopal, etc., but it will suffice for me to refer to the plain principle which underlies the rule The same reasons of policy which have induced us to all but abolish Native Artillery in the British Army, and which make us hesitate to arm our sepoys with the Enfield Rifles, surely demand as an essential complement to these precautions, that we should not allow our Native allies unlimited access to the most efficient arms which our English soldiers can bring to the field".[25] Thus the British Government followed the same policy in Hyderabad as in other Native States, namely, that the armed force of Native States should not exceed the requirements of the State for maintaining internal order.

4. The Nizam was not permitted to enter into any direct relations with foreign powers. In 1874 when Hyderabad's Minister, Sir Salar Jang, employed Mr. Keay for raising funds in England for the construction of the Nizam's State Railway, the Government of India objected to the transaction and wrote to the Secretary of State for India:—"We beg to point out that any operation effected in the European money-market under the guidance of the Nizam constitutes

a direct dealing between a Native State and European Capitalists.. .... The Nizam will be in direct relation with European Capitalists....and that relation is likely to lead to embarrassing political consequences....... Your Lordship is aware that it has from the beginning of our Indian Empire been a cardinal point of our policy to prohibit Native States from entering into any direct relations with foreign powers. But the establishment of direct relations with foreign money markets goes a long way towards the admission of direct relations with foreign Governments, and it is therefore part of our policy to prevent such relations with foreign money markets".[26]

5. With the death of Sir Salar Jang, the able minister of Hyderabad, in February 1883, Lord Ripon decided to have more influence in Hyderabad. Instead of increasing the formal powers of the Resident, he appointed Salar Jang's son, Mir Laik Ali, as Minister, and established a Consultative Council of Regency till 5 February, 1884, when the Nizam was vested with full powers of administration. Thereafter a majority in the Viceroy's Council desired to appoint a senior man as Diwan, Laik Ali being only twenty-one. The Resident also pointed out that if the Nizam were placed in Laik Ali's hands, 'it would be in a short time fatal to both'. It would seem, therefore, that Laik Ali lacked 'the necessary qualifications' which Ripon had insisted in the case of Mysore, but in the case of Hyderabad he said that he preferred to carry out the Nizam's wishes, and Laik Ali's appointment as Diwan was sanctioned. The real reason, however, is revealed by Bayley, the Viceroy's chief adviser on Hyderabad affairs, who urged that while the Resident could check or undo the hasty actions of well-meaning but impulsive youth, he would be powerless if a senior Diwan were appointed. Laik Ali knew to whom he owed his appointment, and leant on the Resident for support. He met Ripon at Calcutta on the eve of the Viceroy's departure, promised not to raise the Berar question in the near future, and agreed to consult the Resident personally on all matters of importance, and to maintain constant direct communication with him. "In Hyderabad, no less than in Mysore and Baroda, while youth was at the helm, the steering was done from Simla".[27]

The Assigned Districts in Berar constituted a cause of friction between the British Government and the Nizam for forty years, and remained an open sore until 1902, when Lord Curzon came to an agreement with the Nizam which satisfactorily solved the problem. It was not possible to hand back the province to the Nizam, for the people of these Assigned Districts, who had enjoyed the benefits of

better administration, were opposed to this policy. The alternative expedient was the arrangement by which the British Government took lease of Berar in perpetuity at an annual rent of £168,000. The Nizam's sovereignty over Berar was reaffirmed, and his flag was to be flown at Amraoti, the capital of the province, on his birthday. The Hyderabad Contingent was fully incorporated in the Imperial Army, and released from the necessity of remaining in the Hyderabad dominions. The Nizam at the same time agreed to effect large reductions in his excessive and unnecessary irregular army. The Hyderabad State was heavily in debt to the British Government, and part of the rent was to be devoted towards liquidating these liabilities The Nizam was to receive, as before, an annual income from Berar—the Berar 'Surplus'.[28]

2. *Baroda*

The Gaekwar of Baroda had concluded a Subsidiary Alliance with the British in 1802, and the relation between them was further regulated by the treaties of 1805 and 1817.

The chief provisions of the Treaty of 1817 were an increase of the Subsidiary Force; the cession to the British Government of all the rights which the Gaekwar had acquired by the farming of the Peshwa's territories in Gujarat; the consolidation of the territories of the British Government and the Gaekwar in Gujarat by exchange of certain districts; the co-operation of the Gaekwar's troops with those of the British Government in times of war; and the mutual surrender of criminals. It is important to emphasize that by this treaty additions were made to the Subsidiary Force, and the Gaekwar agreed "in case of war to bring forward the whole of his resources for the prosecution of the war", and to maintain an effective contingent of 3,000 horse at his own cost to act with the Subsidiary Force when needed.

When Anand Rao died on 2 October, 1819, and was succeeded by his brother, Sayaji Rao II, the British policy towards Baroda changed a good deal. The British Government had by that time emerged as the dominant power in India and therefore could afford to relax the close control over the affairs of the Gaekwar. Therefore, on the accession of Sayaji Rao, the British Government decided to abstain from the minute interference which it had hitherto exercised in the internal affairs of the Baroda State, provided that the Gaekwar respected the British guarantee given to bankers, Ministers and other individuals in his State. This arrangement was the outcome of a visit by the Governor of Bombay, Mountstuart Elphin-

stone, to Baroda in 1820. He held several conferences with Sayaji and finally both parties agreed to the following conditions:—

(1) All foreign forces should remain, as before, under the exclusive management of the British Government.

(2) The Gaekwar should have the unrestrained management of his internal forces provided he fulfilled the arrangements, guaranteed by the British Government, with the bankers. The Resident, moreover, was to be made acquainted with the financial plan of the year, to have access to the accounts, and to be consulted regarding any new plan of large expenditure.

(3) The Gaekwar should observe scrupulously the guarantees of the British Government to Ministers and other individuals.

(4) The Gaekwar might choose his own Ministers on condition of consulting the Resident before nominating them.

(5) The British Government should retain the power of offering advice.

Circumstances, however, forced the British Government to intervene again in the affairs of the Baroda State as the Gaekwar failed to pay regularly the instalments due on his debts which, in 1820, had increased to upward of Rs. 107 lakhs. To remedy this state of affairs, Sir John Malcolm, successor of Elphinstone as Governor of Bombay, took effective measure by sequestrating territories of the State. The first sequestration took place in 1828 and the second in 1830, the latter being, however, disapproved by the Court of Directors. The breach between the two Governments became wide, with the result that the office of the Resident at Baroda was abolished as a separate appointment in 1830, and it was only after five years that it was re-established. Lord Clare, the successor of Sir John Malcolm, visited Baroda in 1832 and arrived at a settlement with Gaekwar. The British Government was released by the bankers from its guarantee on their coming to a satisfactory understanding with the Gaekwar for the adjustment of the debts. The sequestrated districts were restored to the Gaekwar on his depositing Rs 10 lakhs with the British Government to provide for the pay of the cavalry in case his own payment should fail. This conciliatory policy, however, proved to be shortlived. There was a dispute concerning the efficiency of a body of 3,000 cavalry which the Gaekwar maintained to support the Subsidiary Force. The dispute was settled by an Agreement in 1841 which renewed the Treaty of 1817 and provided for a payment of Rs. 3,00,000 for the Gujarat Irregular Horse (a body of cavalry organized by the British); for the maintenance of the contingent of 3,000 horse by the Gaekwar and for its em-

ployment in the tributary districts, the Gaekwar being permitted at any time to reduce the number so employed to 1,500 men.[29]

In December, 1847, Sayaji Rao died and was succeeded by his eldest son, Ganpat Rao. Ganpat Rao died in November, 1856, and was succeeded by his brother Khande Rao. In 1858, as a reward for the Gaekwar's service during the period of the Mutiny, the payment of Rs. 3 lakhs for the Gujarat Irregular Horse, provided by the Agreement of 1841, was remitted; but at the same time the permission given to the Gaekwar to reduce the contingent to 1,500 men was cancelled, and the contingent was put on the same footing as that described in the 8th Article of the Treaty of 1817, with the additional provision that it should do ordinary police duty in the tributary districts.

The Gaekwar tried to assert his power of selecting and dismissing Ministers without consulting the British Government. In 1854 he had been compelled to dismiss a favourite Minister on the advice of the British Government In 1867 he decided to remove his Minister, Diwan Govind Rao, and appointed a favourite who had for years held the post of Commander-in-Chief The Acting Resident at Baroda sought instructions from the Bombay Government regard ing the right claimed by the Gaekwar to appoint a Minister without reference to the British Government. In referring the matter to the Supreme Government, the Bombay authorities explained that although there was no specific treaty obligation on the part of the Gaekwar to submit to Government for approval the name of anyone he wished to appoint as Diwan, yet in practice the right of the Government to require this of the Gaekwar had been maintained, and, when not pressed, had been waived as a special favour. The Bombay authorities, however, recommended that no useful purpose would be served by insisting on the maintenance of this practice as it was "certainly derogatory to the Gaekwar". The latter was responsible to the British Government for the good governance of his territories. Therefore they should do nothing "to thwart him in the selection of the agency employed". If the British Government approved and the selected officer turned out to be a failure, responsibility would be shared by them, and if the Gaekwar's nominee was rejected and another appointed and proved a failure, they would receive the whole odium. Hence the Gaekwar should be allowed "perfect freedom of choice". In recommending this concession, the Bombay authorities, however, wanted to obtain an equivalent concession from the Gaekwar, i e, in matters referred to him by the British Government, the Gaekwar should "meet the Resident in the same conciliatory and liberal spirit, instead of displaying a de-

sire to obstruct improvement, or evade compliance with reasonable requests, as has not infrequently been observed of late years."

The Supreme Government accepted these recommendations. But Sir Stafford Northcote, Secretary of State for India, was not prepared to go to the length of waiving the right of the Government to have a voice in the selection of a Minister, arguing that the question whether "the British Government should interpose its authority, in the event of the appointment of doubtful competency being persisted in", was one of policy "depending in a great measure on the degree of confidence to which the reigning Prince may be entitled", and should be dealt with according to the circumstances at that time.

The relations between the Gaekwar and the British Government were thus strained. Matters came to a crisis in 1870 when Khande Rao was succeeded by Malhar Rao. As the condition of the Baroda State had long been an object of great anxiety to the Bombay Government, they decided to send to the Baroda court a Resident who should exercise more energetic influence. Col. Phayre was appointed Resident in March, 1873. He brought to the notice of the Bombay Government the maladministration in the State. The Government of India appointed a Commission of Inquiry to report on the facts. While Col. Phayre's representations had been unrestrained, the report of the Commission was of a moderate type. Great stress was laid on the fact that no unnecessary interference with the details of the government of the State was contemplated and all individual grievances were to be referred to the Maharaja. Nevertheless, after acquitting the *Durbar* of any notable ill treatment of British subjects, the Commission found that Col. Phayre's charge of general misgovernment was proved. On receipt of their report, the Gaekwar was warned that if certain reforms were not carried out, he would be relieved of his authority. Later, as mentioned above,[30] the Gaekwar was charged with a serious offence—the attempt to poison the Resident, and was deposed. A boy was selected by the Government and adopted by the Maharani, and during his prolonged minority the administration was conducted under the direct control of the Resident by a large staff of British officials.

After attaining majority, the young Maharaja Sayaji Rao Gaekwar III distinguished himself as an able and enlightened ruler and passed a number of liberal measures concerning education and social reform, which were far in advance even of British India.[31] During his long and prosperous rule, Baroda made remarkable progress, and the efficiency of administration was highly improved by the adoption of the British principles.

3. *Gwalior*

Reference has been made above[32] to the gradual stages by which Daulat Rao Sindhia of Gwalior was reduced to the position of a subordinate ally and coerced to accept, on the eve of the Third Maratha War, the treaty of the 5th November, 1817, by which he agreed to locate his troops in positions from which they were not to emerge without the orders of the British Government; to give up the fortress of Asirgarh and Hindia as security for the lines of communication; to give a guarantee for the performance of his engagements and to surrender for three years the tribute of the Rajput States. Shortly after this a new treaty was made on the 25th June, 1818, readjusting the boundaries of his dominions with those of the English. Sindhia received Ajmer and other districts in exchange for lands of equal value. In 1819 Sindhia ceded permanently the fortress of Asirgarh to the English.

Events following the death of Daulat Rao Sindhia, culminating in the British invasion and the conclusion of a treaty in 1844 have been described in detail in Chapter IX and need not be repeated here. By this treaty the sovereignty of the State was retained for Sindhia. The Government during the minority of Jayaji Rao, the adopted son of Jankoji, was to be conducted according to the advice of the British Resident; the British Government pledged itself to maintain the just territorial rights of Gwalior; a territory yielding 18 lakhs of rupees a year was to be ceded to the British Government for maintaining a Contingent Force; the debts due and the expense of war were to be paid; and the army was to be reduced to 6,000 cavalry, 3,000 infantry and 200 gunners with 32 guns. This arrangement ensured peace and an improved administrative system. From 1844 to 1857 Gwalior enjoyed peace and prosperity.

Jayaji Rao Sindhia remained loyal to the British Government during the Mutiny of 1857, and actively helped the British Government.[33] As a reward for his services a new treaty was made on 12 December, 1860, by which lands were restored to Sindhia yielding 3 lakhs of rupees a year, and the exchange of lands he desired for other lands of nearly equal value was arranged with the British Government. He received a *sanad* conferring upon him the right of adoption and permission to raise his infantry from 3,000 to 5,000 men, and his guns from 30 to 36. In place of the Contingent the British Government agreed to maintain a Subsidiary Force.

Although the British Government were considerate in their dealings with the Sindhias, they maintained their control over the foreign policy and the armed forces of the State. On these two questions there could be no relaxation from the general policy to

be followed towards the Native States of India. One example may be cited of this policy. The request of Sindhia for police batallions "for the police and revenue matters of the interior" had been agreed to by the Government in May, 1858, on the understanding that "they were to constitute a police and not a military force". Apprehensions of Major Meade, Governor-General's Agent to Central Indian States, were roused in April, 1866, when, on inspecting one of the police batallions, he found it so well drilled as to be fit to take its place in line with the regular army. In reporting this Meade drew particular attention of the Government to the Maharaja's character: "The Maharaja's passion from his youth had been essentially military so far as the term can be applied to dressing, equipping, and drilling his troops and in fact 'playing at soldiers' ". The Government ordered Meade to adopt measures for breaking up the Nijeebs (police) as a military force and dispersing a portion of the regular army of the State, which was concentrated at the capital. He also directed Sindhia not to maintain at Gwalior more than one-half to two-thirds of his regular army, and to canton the remainder in different parts of the country.

The British Government also did not allow much latitude to Sindhia in claiming exemptions from administrative measures which were considered necessary by the Government of India. Thus in 1866 certain rules were sanctioned by the Government of India for enforcing the responsibility of Indian States for mail robberies committed within their territories. Sindhia asked for special exemption from the operation of these rules on grounds of comparative excellence of his police arrangements; but the request was turned down and he was informed that it rested with him, by still further improving his police, to avoid the chance of being affected by the penalties laid down in the rules.[34]

After the capture of Gwalior by the force under Sir Hugh Rose in 1858, British troops continued to occupy the fort of Gwalior. During the negotiations which ended in the treaty of 1860, Lord Canning promised that the fort would be restored to Sindhia when this could be done with safety; and this promise was repeated by Lord Elgin. Its fulfilment depended on the withdrawal of a British force from Morar to some more eligible station. It was, however, decided in 1864 that the cantonment of Morar should be maintained; and this necessitated the continued occupation of the Gwalior fort by British troops. The actual evacuation of Gwalior and Morar by the British troops took place on 10 March, 1886, and on the same day the town and fort of Jhansi were made over to the British by the Gwalior authorities.

4. *Mysore*

Reference has been made above[35] to the dethronement of the Maharaja of Mysore by Lord Bentinck in 1831. The British assumed the direct management of the State, subject to the claim of the Maharaja, reserved by the treaty, to a provision of one lakh of Star Pagodas a year and one-fourth of the net revenue realized from the treasury. The British Government was to administer the State until arrangements for the good government of the country should be so firmly established as to secure it from future disturbances. In 1834 Lord William Bentinck, the Governor-General, visited Mysore and an agreement was made by which the districts of Nagar, Chitaldrug, and Bangalore were ceded to the British Government to meet the financial claims of the Government of India on the Maharaja. The Government was carried on by "British Commissioners for the government of the territories of Mysore" At first there was a Board of two Commissioners with a Resident attached, as before, to the Court of the Maharaja It was, however, almost immediately found necessary to substitute for the Board a single Commissioner; and in 1843, the post of Resident was abolished. The British policy towards the native States of India can be clearly understood by its attitude towards Mysore. The instructions of the Governor-General to the Madras Government on the first assumption of the administration were to the effect that "the agency under the Commissioners should be exclusively native; indeed, that the existing native institutions should be clearly maintained". These instructions were as far as possible adhered to in the early days of the Commission, but in course of time it was alleged that the Mysore Government was rotten to the core, that the powers of the various departments of courts were ill-defined and involved endless appeals. and that the evils inherent in this state of things lay too deep to be removed by one Commissioner aided by the existing native agency. It was therefore decided to substitute 4 European Superintendents for the native *Faujdars*. The *"Huzur Adalat"*, composed of native judges, was at first allowed to remain the highest judicial authority in the State though its sentences were made subject to the confirmation by the Commissioner. But not long afterwards a Judicial Commissioner was substituted for it. This is one instance of the control exercised by the British officers in the judicial department. Other departments were also put under the control of the British officers.

At different times the Maharaja made applications for the restoration of his State. As noted above,[36] Lord William Bentinck, who deposed the Maharaja in 1831, wrote to the Secret Committee of the

Court of Directors in 1834 that he was convinced by later inquiry that the deposition of the Maharaja was both illegal and unfair, and that the disposition of the Maharaja was "the reverse of tyrannical or cruel". Nevertheless, the appeal of the Maharaja was refused both by the Government of India and the Home authorities. The application made in February, 1861, was rejected by Lord Canning on March 18, 1862. The Maharaja appealed to the British Government again in 1862. The British Government informed the Maharaja that he could not as a right claim the restoration of the State and that the reinstatement of the Maharaja in the administration of the country was incompatible with the true interests of the people of Mysore. On this final decision being communicated in February, 1864, the Maharaja requested the Government to permit him to adopt a son. This request was refused on the ground that no authority to adopt a successor to the State of Mysore had ever been given to him and that no such power could now be considered In June, 1865, the Maharaja adopted a child, and in April, 1867, the British Government at last agreed to recognize this adoption. The Government proceeded even further, and, on the death of the Maharaja in 1868, decided to restore the kingdom to the adopted son when he came of age, provided he was found qualified for the position.[37] The adopted son came of age in 1881 when the question of the rendition of Mysore State came up for the decision of the British Government.

Lord Ripon, the Viceroy of India, was a man of liberal views, and justly decided in favour of the rendition of the Mysore State.[38] In restoring the territories to the Maharaja, Lord Ripon could not forget that for about 50 years the Government of India had directly administered the State. This was a fairly long period of British rule. Its implications were threefold: (1) The long interregnum of 50 years would imply that the restoration of territories would be virtually a fresh gift of territories and not merely the termination of a temporary period of British administration. (2) Previous treaties were no longer valid and a new treaty should embody fresh rights and obligations (3) For 50 years the British officials had worked hard to improve the administration of the State. Justice had been improved, law and order had been established, and the administration on the whole had shown considerable improvement. It was necessary that this administrative progress must not be checked. Hence there was need of curtailing the Maharaja's authority and of widening the scope of interference by the Government of India in the internal affairs of the State. The Instrument of Transfer, which was essentially the handiwork of Ripon, shows the impress of these

ideas. It drastically curtailed the authority of the Maharaja and his successors, and emphasized that they would hold these territories as long as they fulfilled the conditions laid down in it. The first and essential condition was that of loyalty to the British Government. The Maharaja was required to remain at all times faithful in allegiance and subordination to the Queen. Some of the important clauses of the treaty referred to the military forces of the State. These forces were not to exceed the limit to be fixed from time to time by the Governor-General in Council. The permission of the Government was required for the construction of new fortresses and the repair of old ones. The Maharaja was not to object to the establishment of cantonments by the British Government. Restrictions on the import of arms, ammunition or military stores were to be laid down according to the policy of the Government of India. The Maharaja was to have no external relations except with the previous sanction and through the medium of the Government of India. The Maharaja was to afford all facilities for railways and telegraphs and also to adopt the coinage of British India. The permission of the Government was necessary for the employment of any person, not "a native of India" The Maharaja was to comply with the wishes of the Governor-General in Council in the matter of prohibiting or limiting the manufacture of salt and opium. The most important clauses of the Treaty were those for ensuring good government The Maharaja was to maintain all laws (and rules having the force of law) already in force. No material change in the system of administration (as established at the time of his accession to power) was to be made without the consent of the Government of India All title-deeds granted and all settlements of land revenue made during the British administration of the State were to be maintained The Maharaja was to conform to such advice as the Governor-General in Council might offer to him with a view to the improvement of his administration In case the Maharaja did not fulfil these conditions, it would lead to resumption or other arrangements for the administration of the State In all these matters the decision of the Governor-General in Council was to be final.

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1. *CHI*, VI 491.
2. *The Government of India*, p 114.
2a See above, p 667
3 "Before the Mutiny the British had not assumed that they were the paramount power exercising suzerainty over the whole of India. Thus the President of the Board of Control wrote to Dalhousie on May 9, 1854, that in cases of succession to an independent sovereignty where no question of lapse was raised, he preferred the selection of a competent ruler to an adoption.

"Lord Dalhousie wrote on the 25th of June, 1854: 'I repeat that a Hindu principality, such as Tehri, not tributary nor subordinate, and not having the British Government as its paramount in the technical sense, has a perfect right to regulate its own succession; and the Government of India has no more right to interfere with it than it has to meddle with the succession of France.'

"No one hears today of the 'independence' of Native States or compares the protected semi-sovereignties of India to the nation of France. The division between dependent and independent States, or between subordinate, tributary, and non-subordinate chief-ships has been swept away" (Warner, II. 154-5).

4 See above, p 54.
5. See above, p. 58
6 Prof Holdsworth, *Law Quarterly Review*, 1930.
7 Letter to Queen Victoria in November, 1875.
8. Despatch No 69 of 3 June, 1875.
9. See pp. 706-36
10. Sir T Raleigh, *Lord Curzon in India*, 226.
10a The author of this section has dealt with the topics covered by it more fully, and with full reference, in his books, specially the two following:
1. *Evolution of British Policy towards Indian States.*
2 *Introduction to the study of the relations of Indian States with the Government of India.*
11. See p 86
12 See pp 37 ff
13. See p 447.
13a See pp 27 ff.
14 Cf the cases of Chandulal in Hyderabad (p 88) and of Mama Sahib in Gwalior (p 224)
15 See p 728
15a. Cf. Chapters III and IV.
16 See p 966.
17 See pp. 751 ff, 770 ff.
17a The Editor is responsible for this paragraph.
18. Aitchison, IX. 7.
19 See pp 84 ff
20. Lee-Warner, *Native States of India*, p. 231.
21. Aitchison, IX. 8
22 Letter from the Resident of Hyderabad to the Government of India, dated 28 March, 1867 (Pol A Progs, April, 1867, No. 132).
23. Ibid, No. 30.
24 Resident of Hyderabad to the Government of India, 26 October, 1865 (Foreign-General Progs, July, 1866, No. 57).
25 Government of India to Bombay Government, 22 October, 1867 (Pol A Progs, October, 1867, No. 148).
26. Foreign General Progs., No 67, September, 1875.
27. Gopal, *The Viceroyalty of Lord Ripon*, 1880-84, pp 211-2.
28 Lovat Fraser, *India under Curzon and After*, pp. 224-6.
29. For the texts of the treaties and engagements referred to above, cf. Aitchison.
30. See p. 966
31 See pp 977-9
32. Cf. Vol. VIII.
33. See pp. 492, 582, 584.
34 See pp. 987-8.
35. See pp. 37-41.
36. See pp. 39-40.
37. The date of the Maharaja's death and the decision of the Government, as stated on p. 41, lines 28-9, should be corrected in the light of this sentence. (Ed.)
38 As suggested above, on p. 967, the reaction to the deposition of the Gaekwar probably influenced this decision to some extent. (Ed.)

CHAPTER XXXI

NORTH-WESTERN FRONTIER

The conquest of Sindh in 1843 and of the Punjab in 1849 brought the Government of India in direct contact with the hilly territories, stretching up to the border of Afghanistan, and inhabited by a large number of autonomous clans of Baluch tribes in the south and principally of Pathan tribes in the north. The Amir of Afghanistan, to whom they were attached by ties of religion and language, claimed a nominal suzerainty over some of them, but in reality they exercised independent authority within their secluded, and almost inaccessible, hills and dales. There were quite a large number of big tribes, each of whom was again sub-divided into a number of clans, and these had mostly a loose type of democratic political organization,—the *jirga* or the assembly of the adult males being the supreme controlling authority.

The nature of these people was largely formed by the geographical and economic condition of the country. Sturdy and fierce from the rigour of climate and nature of soil, they brooked no control over them and loved independence above everything else. Unfortunately, their economic condition made it almost impossible for them to respect the independence of others or even to cherish human instincts for the sanctity of the life and property of their neighbours. The hills were barren and almost waterless, and it is a common saying among these tribes that when God created the world He dumped the rubbish on the frontier. But the same God placed before the eyes of these hungry people rich and fertile plains and villages below with routes for caravans of trade. It would indeed be a miracle if the hardy tribesmen were not tempted to supply by their own effort what nature so niggardly denied to them. So, from time immemorial, these hillmen carried on plundering raids on the neighbouring districts, stealing the flock, robbing the caravans, and murdering and plundering dwellers on the plains. These became fat and indolent by the clemencies of nature and were no match for the hardy tribesmen whom their native hills had endowed with courage, endurance, and military skill, and who never felt any compunction for any cruelty inflicted upon others for gaining their own ends.

This constituted the Frontier Problem, and the Government of India was faced with the grave and difficult task of dealing with

ferocious and unscrupulous freebooters who frequently indulged in mass raids for plunder inside the British territories. In 1846, about 1500 of them marched across the British frontier of Sindh, stayed there for twenty-four hours, and returned to their hills, seventy-five miles away, with 15,000 heads of cattle. These wild tribes were also guilty of other crimes. Sir Richard Temple, who had intimate experience of the Pathan tribes, accuses them "of giving asylum to fugitives from justice, of violating British territory, of blackmail and intrigue, of minor robberies, and of isolated murders of British subjects".[1]

The turbulence of these tribes did not begin with the rule of the British. Their predecessors, the Sikhs, had to adopt stern measures to control them, and it is even said that under Sikh rule some villages near Peshawar "were actually held by a yearly tribute of so many human heads taken from their neighbours across the border."[2]

The British tried to grapple with the problem in two different ways. In Sindh, Sir Charles Napier built forts, posted detachments of troops at certain points, and occasionally led expeditions against the tribes. But these measures did not prove effective Next, Major John Jacob adopted the method of vigilant patrolling. Sir Robert Sandeman adopted a more conciliatory policy. He kept himself in constant and intimate touch with the tribes by visiting their territories. He also introduced the system of granting allowances to tribesmen for maintaining peace, guarding trade-routes and passes, and meting out justice according to the decision of the tribal *jirga* (assembly). This has been criticized as paying blackmail, but it worked very successfully among the Baluch tribes who always recognized a tribal organization and obeyed their chiefs who were powerful enough to control them.

The tribes, who lived beyond the frontiers of the Punjab, mostly Pathans, were made of different stuff. They had democratic spirit and organization, in which each man claimed equality with another and, being prone to act for himself, could ill brook the control of the *jirga* or Council of headmen. They were more fanatic than the Baluchis and apt to be easily excited by the Mullahs or tribal priests Fierce and blood-thirsty, they were extremely avaricious, capable of doing any crime for the sake of plunder. The measures successfully adopted in Sindh proved ineffective in the Punjab, and Dalhousie was faced with the grave problem of dealing with the Pathan tribes immediately after the annexation of the Punjab. He adopted conciliatory measures and tried to win over the tribesmen by offering them peaceful pursuits. He also established a series of fortified

posts to check their raids. But these measures proved unsuccessful. In 1851 Mr. Carne, the head of the customs department, and his assistant, Mr. Tupp, were murdered by a party of Hassan Zais in the estate of the Khan of Amb. Dalhousie called upon him to punish the murderers whereupon the Khan seized some of the offenders and sent them as hostages to the British. This was a signal for a general rising of the tribesmen who seized two forts of the Khan and reduced him to considerable straits. A British force of 3800 men was sent in December, 1852, who destroyed several villages.[3] The Mohmands proved equally troublesome. They committed frequent raids on British villages, seized sentries on outpost-duty, and even murdered British subjects in the cantonments at Peshawar. On October 25, 1851, Sir Colin Campbell undertook a long series of operations. A fort was erected at Michni and several Mohmand forts were destroyed. But these proved ineffective, as Lieutenant Boulnois was murdered while riding out peacefully beyond the works at Michni. Accordingly, a more severe penalty was inflicted by another expedition in April, 1852. Even this proved insufficient, and a third expedition was sent in 1854 During the period 1851 to 1856 Dalhousie punished ten tribes in addition to those mentioned above.

These harsh punitive measures did not commend themselves even to the military In 1852 Sir Colin Campbell was unwilling to furnish troops against the Swat tribesmen, and was rebuked by Dalhousie as the General said his refusal was "based not on military grounds but on his own doubt as to the justice of the political considerations on which punitive operations were proposed" The Commander-in-Chief having supported Campbell, Dalhousie bluntly told them that neither of them "had any concern with the political aspect of the case." To prevent such conflict in future, definite powers were conferred upon the Board of Administration in the Punjab "to make requisitions for military assistance on the Commander-in-Chief, which his Excellency was told he was not competent to disregard except on purely military grounds."[4]

Dalhousie's action was also severely condemned by a section of public opinion in England. The *Times*, in a leading article on February 3, 1852, attributed the action of Dalhousie to "an insatiable desire for conquest," and openly charged him with inflicting heavy punishment on the various frontier tribes "upon pleas of provocation". The article concluded with the following observation: "It seems impossible that anything can be gained by such measures. If we pushed our posts to the very centre of Tartary, our neighbours would be robbers still, and why should we not make the best of

matters on our boundaries, instead of going to fight the same game 500 miles off".[5] But the admonition of the *Times* had no effect. It is interesting to note how this humanitarian spirit in England rapidly passed away in course of half a century. "After the disappointment of half a century", writes an eminent English writer, "the school of thought represented by the critics of 1902 condemns the policy of the fifties not because it was too aggressive, but because it was too submissive".[6]

The measures adopted by Dalhousie were ultimately crystallized in a definite policy, and the tribesmen on the border of the Punjab were kept down by three methods, namely, fines, blockades, and expeditions. Fines were imposed as a compensation for plunder and murder, but it was not always easy to realize them. In some cases hostages were seized and detained until fines were paid. Another effective means to control the tribes was to blockade all the approaches of their territory in such a manner that no ingress or egress was possible. But an effective blockade depended upon the geographical situation and the attitude of the surrounding tribes. The last method, adopted in case of continued depredations, was punitive expedition which, in practice, meant "an indiscriminate slaughter and destruction of crops and villages".[7] It was regarded as both impolitic and immoral even by some of the highest British officials. Sir Bartle Frere condemned it, for it 'meant that the whole tribe was punished for the offences of a few malcontents, and the real result was to make a desert and call it peace'.[8] Lord Lytton also severely condemned it, and the following lines from his minute, dated April 22, 1877, scathingly expose the immorality and inexpediency of the whole system: "I object to it because it perpetuates a system of semi-barbarous reprisal, and because we lower ourselves to the ideas of right and might common to our barbarous neighbours, rather than endeavour to raise them to our own ideas, because it seldom touches the guilty, and generally falls most heavily on the innocent; because its natural tendency is to perpetuate animosity rather than lead up to good relations; because, as a rule, it leaves no permanent mark.......and it appears from the records of these expeditions, which are not always successes even in the most limited sense, that the losses suffered by ourselves often exceed the losses we inflict".[9]

The punitive expedition was supported on the ground of absolute necessity and the precedent of the Sikh Government. It was also claimed that the authorities never took resort to it unless other measures failed or were not practicable, and when the crimes committed by the tribes were of such an enormous character that a

punitive expedition was absolutely essential for the protection of British subject and the maintenance of British prestige. It is, however, difficult to believe that a weapon so handy was never used save in such an extreme emergency. Nor is it possible to disagree with a modern British historian that "this policy of butcher and bolt", as punitive expeditions have been contemptuously termed, will never produce any lasting effect.

It is stated by some authorities that no less than forty-two expeditions were undertaken by the British against the turbulent tribesmen between 1849 and 1890, causing a total of 2173 British casualties. But this evidently includes the military campaigns against the Wahabis in A.D. 1863 and thereabout, when they were supported by the Pathan tribes, as has been mentioned above.[9a] The severity of the struggle with the Wahabis is indicated by the fact that the British sustained 908 casualties in the year 1863 alone

The conclusion of the Second Afghan War brought in a new phase in the relation between the British and the border hill tribes. The resurrection of the "Forward Policy",[9b] which led to that war, as mentioned above, had also its effect on the administrative policy towards the tribes. There was a deliberate attempt on the part of the Government of India to tighten the hold on the tribes. In Sindh, the British secured a firm footing in the heart of the tribal domains by the treaty with the Khan of Kalat, referred to above.[10] This led to the foundation of the Baluchistan Agency under an Agent to the Governor-General with his headquarters at Quetta. Reference has been made above to the policy of Major Sandeman who was first appointed to this post on February 21, 1877 Sandeman relied for the success of his policy upon the complete domination of the Baluchis by British troops, who occupied strategic positions commanding the routes from Sindh, the border between the different tribes, and the way of their retreat to the west to seek shelter in Afghanistan The gradual occupation of the Bori and Zhob valleys was a part of this plan of military domination. A military expedition in 1884 forced their chiefs to allow the location of British troops in these two valleys. Three years later, Bori and the adjoining tract were brought under the British administration in Baluchistan. In 1889 Sandeman announced in the *Durbar* of the representatives of the tribes "that in future Zhob was to be looked upon as a British Protectorate". To safeguard the Gomal Pass three posts were established and the local tribes were granted usual allowances for the protection of the route.

In the Punjab, as in Sindh, the British attitude was purely defensive until the arrival of Lord Lytton. Owing to the nature of the

hilly region, the British officers held no intercourse with the tribes in their homes and kept aloof from these turbulent peoples so long as they did not disturb the peace of the British territories. In fact the frontier zone was a *terra incognita* which it was dangerous to traverse. But all this was slowly changed to a policy of active interference. Its first indication may be traced in making it compulsory for the British civil officers to learn the language of the border peoples. Gradually special officers, called Political Agents, were appointed to manage the tribes. The first Political Agent was appointed in Khyber during the Second Afghan War, and four more agencies were set up at Kurram, Malakand, Tochi, and Wana between 1892 and 1896. The efficiency of the border defence was also improved. On the recommendations of a Defence Committee which met at Peshawar in 1877, a regular defensive system, based on newly created bodies of border Police and Militia, was sanctioned in 1878. At the same time large colonies of the Pathan tribes were settled within British territory. A chain of forts was constructed along the frontier with good military roads parallel to it.

Before the conclusion of the Second Afghan War, the tribal peoples were mere pawns in a big game, and occupied a minor place in the grandiose schemes of the "Forward School", which looked upon the Hindu Kush mountains as the natural line of defence and sought to control effectively the whole of Afghanistan. When this ambition was shattered by the result of that war, attention was concentrated upon the tribal peoples who now constituted the first line of defence beyond the borders of India. This accounts for a feverish attempt to plant the British authority firmly over the western defensive zone.

The task proved to be comparatively easy in Baluchistan, as the ground was already prepared, and, it must be admitted, mainly because the natural obstacles provided by the hills were not so formidable as in the north. As noted above, Pishin and Sibi were retained by the British after the Second Afghan War. These were added to the agency territories, either acquired by lease or otherwise brought under British control, and placed under a Chief Commissioner. This area, together with the subordinate native States of Kalat and Las Bela, constituted British Baluchistan. During the eighties the whole of this region was developed by the construction of new roads and irrigation projects, and development of forest. Regular arrangements were made for the collection of land revenue and administration of justice, more or less on the old indigenous system. On the whole this southern zone was fast developing into a regularly constituted province as a part of British India.

The case was, however, different in the northern zone whose peoples proved less tractable because of the shelter of their inaccessible hills and dales. During the war with Afghanistan in 1878-79 many of the tribes had assumed truculent attitude and created disturbances. A series of outrages by these hill tribes, and punitive military expeditions against them, marked the period between 1886 and 1893. More important among these were three expeditions against the Black Mountain tribes to the east of the Sindhu and north of Hazara district in 1888 and 1891, two against the Orakzais in 1891 and 1892, and a series of campaigns in Western Kashmir leading to the subjugation of Hunza and the occupation of Chitral to which reference will be made later. On the other hand, the Kurram valley was peacefully occupied at the invitation of the Turis who were Shiahs and therefore hostile to the neighbouring Pathan tribes who were Sunnis.[11] It was feared by the British that these tribes might be good instruments in the hands of the Amir for harassing the British, not only in case of war between the two, but even in times of peace. It was therefore felt that these tribes should be brought under effective control. But considerable uncertainty existed regarding the political status of these tribes, particularly in relation to the Amir and the British, and "the tribesmen constantly took advantage of this uncertainty, playing off the one against the other."

For though these tribes were independent for all practical purposes, the Amir of Afghanistan claimed a sort of suzerainty over them. Any attempt to establish real control over them was therefore likely to create troubles with the Amir. In order to remove this difficulty a proposal was made to the Amir to delimit, and where possible to demarcate, the boundary of his kingdom on the east and south, as had already been done in the north. This boundary line would define the spheres of influence, respectively of the Amir and the British, and neither would interfere in any way with the tribes living on the other side of his boundary. This was agreed to by the Amir, though it must have caused a wrench in his heart, for after all these people were his kith and kin, speaking the same language and recognizing him as the head of their religion, and even the nominal acknowledgement of his suzerainty gave him a prestige in the eyes of his peoples.[12] There is no doubt that the shrewd and intelligent Abdur Rahman, chastened in spirit by the two wars of Afghanistan with the British and the memory of his life as an exile in Russia, yielded to considerations of prudence. But his *amour propre* was wounded, and he looked upon the arrangement with gloomy forebodings. This finds a beautiful expression in the following passage of his letter to the Viceroy:

"If you should cut them out of my dominions they will neither be of any use to you nor to me. You will always be engaged in fighting or other trouble with them, and they will always go on plundering. As long as your Government is strong and in peace, you will be able to keep them quiet by a strong hand, but if at any time a foreign enemy appear on the borders of India, these frontier tribes will be your worst enemies..... In your cutting away from me these frontier tribes, who are people of my nationality and my religion, you will injure my prestige in the eyes of my subjects, and will make me weak and my weakness is injurious to your Government".[13]

The real attitude of the Amir towards the delimitation and demarcation of frontier was well known to the Government of India, and it has been alleged that he carried on intrigues with some border tribes in order to establish his authority over them before the process of delimitation began. There is no positive evidence of this, but the Amir refused an invitation of Lord Lansdowne to visit him in India in order to discuss the matter. He also demurred to a visit of Lord Roberts to Kabul as the head of a mission to discuss the question. Next, a mission under Sir Mortimer Durand left Peshawar for Kabul, in October, 1893, with the avowed object of concluding a "boundary agreement with the Amir which should for ever settle the responsibilities of the Kabul Government as regards the outlying independent tribes on our border".[14] The mission was cordially received at Kabul, but it was not till after much persuasion from the British and procrastination and delay on the part of the Amir, that he at last signed the agreement in November, 1893. The increase of his subsidy by six lakhs of Rupees and the recognition of his right to import munitions of war were no doubt powerful factors weighing with the Amir, but it is curious to note that though he signed the agreement he refused to sign the maps which illustrated the boundary line fixed by it.[15] This line was demarcated during 1894-96 after a detailed survey along the whole of the extensive boundary line with the exception of a small portion of the Khyber area, and was known as the Durand Line.

Far worse than that on the Amir was, however, the reaction of the delimitation on the tribes who, without their knowledge or consent, suddenly found themselves within the sphere of British power and influence, and beyond the pale of protection by the Amir of Kabul, whom they looked upon as their religious head and regarded as protector in times of need. They instinctively felt that the control of the British would be far more real and substantial than could ever be imposed by the Amir, even if he had chosen to do so. Besides, the artificial boundary line cut across ethnic ties, and peo-

ples belonging to the same tribe or clan found themselves on different sides of the border. These and other reasons created trouble and turmoil which occasionally led to serious tribal risings in the frontier, specially during the last fifteen years covered by this volume.

Before proceeding further with the history of the hill tribes, it is necessary to give a short account of those who occupied the territory between the Durand Line and the regular administrative boundary of the Punjab and Sindh in British India, and thus came within the sphere of British influence.

The Durand line starts from the Tagdumbash at the north-east corner of the Hindu Kush where it touches the Muztagh Range. Following the line of the Hindu Kush, in west-west-south direction, it goes by the Manda Pass, separating Chitral from Kaffiristan. Then running almost due south, it crosses the Kunar, and passes through Bajaur and the territory of the Mohmands till it reaches the Kabul river about 12 miles to the north of Landi Kotal.

Chitral is inhabited by a group of non-Pathan peoples speaking a language, which is different from Pushtu, the *lingua franca* of the Pathans, but is very closely related to the Iranian Ghalchah languages spoken by the peoples of the Pamirs and the Oxus living to the north of the Hindu Kush. The peoples belong to the Sunni sect of the Muslims, but have retained some of the old Hindu customs and beliefs such as the caste and worship of images.

To the south of Chitral lay the independent tracts of Dir, Swat, Bajaur, and Buner, inhabited by the descendants of two large Pathan tribes, the Khakhai and the Ghoria Khel, who had migrated from Kabul, via Jalalabad, and expelled the original inhabitants. The Yusafzais and the Mohmands are the principal representatives of the two original tribes who were divided, in course of time, into a number of clans.

To the south of the Kabul river lies the tract of land known as Tirah. In the northern part of it, as well as round the Khyber, dwell the Afridis, who speak Pushtu and are Sunni Muslims, but contain a large racial element already settled in this region long before it was occupied by the Afghan invaders. In the southern valleys live a number of heterogeneous tribes who are known collectively as the Orakzais or 'lost tribes'. To the west of Tirah, in the Kurram valley, live the Turis who speak Pushtu but are Shiah Muslims, and claim to have migrated from Persia. Between the Kurram and the Gomal rivers lies Waziristan, 'an intricate maze of mountains and valleys,' often referred to as frontier Switzerland. In the heart of this region live the Mahsuds, almost surrounded by

the Darvesh Khels. These two tribes, collectively known as Waziris, claim to be Pathans, but are supposed by some to be of Rajput extraction. To the east of Waziristan, along the Sindhu from Bannu to the Peshawar district, live the Khattaks, "the most favourable specimens of Pathans on the whole frontier." Dera Ismail Khan, to the south of Waziristan, is peopled by the Jats and Pathans, who form respectively about two-thirds and one-third of the total population.[16]

The troubles with the frontier tribes, as noted above, became more acute by the 'Forward Policy' of Lord Lytton. In view of Russian activity in Central Asia he sought to bring under effective control the passes of the Hindu Kush from the eastern border of Afghanistan to the north-western boundary of Kashmir. So, on his advice, the Maharaja of Kashmir tried to extend his suzerainty over Chitral as well as Mastuj and Yasin, which lie between it and Gilgit. As the Chitralis were not Pathans and disliked the Amir of Afghanistan, the *Mehtar* (ruler) of Chitral, Aman-ul-mulk, acknowledged the suzerainty of Kashmir in return for a subsidy of Rs. 12,000. Lytton warned the Amir that "any interference in the affairs of Bajaur, Swat, Dir, or Chitral would be regarded as an unfriendly act towards the Government of India." Lord Lytton also sent an Agent to Gilgit in order to establish British authority over the neighbouring tribes. As no fruitful result ensued, the Agent was recalled, but the agency was re-established by Lansdowne in 1889.[17]

Soon troubles arose in Hunza and Nagar, two petty States divided by the Hunza river, over both of which China claimed a vague suzerainty. These are situated at the junction of the Hindu Kush and Muztagh Ranges, and surrounded on all sides by high hills, rising occasionally to 20,000 ft. above the sea-level. They acquired importance in the British defensive system because a very difficult caravan route connected them with the Pamirs and the Yarkand valley. They nominally acknowledged the suzerainty of Kashmir, on payment of an allowance, and agreed, in 1889, to accept the control of the Political Agent of Gilgit in return for an additional annual subsidy. But when the British commenced to erect a fort in Chalt and decided to connect it by a good military road with Gilgit, the two chiefs, alarmed at these attempts at opening their country, resisted them by force. They were defeated after a sharp engagement and their country was occupied.

But troubles soon broke out in the Chitral valley. The death of the *Mehtar*, Aman-ul-mulk, in 1892 was followed by a struggle for succession. One of his sons, Afzal-ul-mulk, ascended the throne, while another, named Nizam-ul-mulk, a rival candidate, took refuge with the British Agent at Gilgit. After reigning for a little over two

months Afzal-ul-mulk was surprised and killed by his uncle Sher Afzal, who had been living for many years as an exile in Badakhshan on an allowance granted by the Amir of Kabul. But as soon as Nizam-ul-mulk advanced from Gilgit, Sher Afzal fled and took refuge with the Afghan Commander-in-Chief, then at Asmar. There is hardly any doubt that Nizam-ul-mulk owed his success to the British, and soon a British mission under Robertson arrived at Chitral. Robertson made a number of concrete proposals to establish firmly the British authority in Chitral and Yasin, but Lord Lansdowne did not encourage the idea, and issued instructions towards the end of 1893 for the withdrawal of the Political Officer from Chitral, if no further complications occurred.

But shortly after this Nizam-ul-mulk was killed by a follower of his half-brother, Amir-ul-mulk, who ascended the throne (January, 1895). At the same time a Pathan chief of Jandol proclaimed *Jihad* or holy war against the English throughout Dir, Swat and Bajaur, and was joined by Sher Afzal, the fugitive ex-ruler of Chitral. Even the new ruler Amir-ul-mulk was suspected of sympathy and intrigue with this group. So the British Agent, Robertson, recognized Shuja-ul-mulk as the *Mehtar* or ruler of Chitral. Thereupon a combined force of Chitralis and Pathans besieged Robertson in fort Chitral. After a memorable siege lasting from March 4 to April 19, 1895, in course of which the defenders displayed heroic courage, Robertson was relieved by a British force from Gilgit which covered the distance of 350 miles in 35 days. The invaders raised the siege and dispersed in all directions.

The future policy towards Chitral once more brought into prominence the difference between the Forward School and its opponents and became a subject of party politics in Britain. The Government of India decided, on May 8, 1895, to continue its hold on Chitral by retaining the garrison there, and construct a military road from Peshawar to Chitral via Swat.[18] The Liberal Ministry of Rosebery disapproved of the decision and sent telegraphic instructions to that effect on June 13, 1895. But the Conservative Ministry of Salisbury, which soon came into power, reversed the decision of its predecessor and upheld the plan of the Government of India. So a garrison was permanently stationed at Chitral, and British troops were posted to guard the Malakand Pass and the crossing of the Swat river. Allowances were granted to the tribes-people for guarding the road and telegraph line.[19]

Lord Elgin, the new Viceroy, steered a middle course between wholesale annexation of the tribal areas and abstention from any active interference save punitive measures for actual depredations.

He advocated the construction of well-fortified posts within the territories of the tribes to keep them in check.[20] An experiment was made with Wana which guarded the Gomal, protected Zhob, and kept in check the Abdurrahman Khels, a turbulent people in South Waziristan. On November 3, 1894, the camp of the British Boundary Commission at Wana was attacked by the Mahsuds, and a regular military expedition was sent against them under Sir William Lockhart. The tribes were pacified by grant of allowance and agreed to maintain peace and guard the route. As soon as this was arranged, a part of Northern Waziristan was brought under British administration.

The British next decided to construct another fortified post in the Tochi valley in order to control Northern Waziristan and to keep in check the Mahsuds and the Darwesh Khels. The task was facilitated by the hostility between the Dawaris of the Tochi valley, a non-Pathan unwarlike people, and the Waziris. The Dawaris were easily induced to accept the British protection against their hated neighbours, and the Tochi valley was occupied without any difficulty.

But troubles were not long in coming The Madda Khels of Maizar, a group of villages in the Upper Tochi, were dissatisfied with the fine inflicted upon them, by way of blood money, for the murder of a British subject in 1896. Mr Gee, the Political Officer, went to Maizar with the double object of settling this matter and selecting a suitable site for a levy-post between Sheranna and Maizar which would control the entrance to the Tochi valley from the Afghan side and the direct route to Birmal and Ghazni from the British side of the Durand Line. On June 10, 1897, Mr. Gee and his party were treacherously attacked by the Madda Khels, and this was a signal for wide-spread tribal insurrection over an extensive frontier region both to the north and to the south of the Kabul river.

It is not necessary to give a detailed account of the tribal risings in 1897-98, and a reference to the principal centres must suffice. In the north the tribes in the Swat valley, led by one Sadullah, better known as the Mad Mullah, attacked Malakand and Chakdarra, and fiercely resisted the British troops before they were forced to retire. The Mohmands rose under one Najmuddin, known as the Adda Mullah, and attacked the village of Shankargarh and the neighbouring fort of Shabkadar in the Peshawar District.

The Afridis and the Orakzais, living to the south of the Safed Koh range, rose under Mullah Sayyid Akbar, an Aka Khel Afridi, captured the Khyber forts and besieged the Samana posts. Numerous military expeditions had to be sent by the Government of India to Datta Khel in the Tochi, Swat, Bajaur, Chamla, the Utman Khel

country, and Buner. A force was sent from Peshawar against the Mohmands, and the campaign in Tirah by a well-equipped force battered down the strong opposition of the Afridis and the Orakzais.

The British official point of view was simple enough. The tribal peoples were, as usual, guilty of unprovoked aggression causing serious damage to life and property, and so punitive expeditions had to be sent against them. But this was an over-simplification of the problem. The question that really mattered was, why did all the tribes—Wajirs, the Mohmands, and the peoples of Swat, Bajaur, Buner and other places—suddenly declare war against the British at the same time.

This sudden conflagration among the tribes along practically the whole border of the Punjab gave rise to a great deal of speculation about its cause and nature. The two main causes which lay on the surface were local grievances and the fanaticism of the Mullahs. The Afridis, for example, categorically stated that they were goaded to revolt by three main grievances, viz., the encroachment upon their territory by the British, increase in the salt-tax, and interference with their tribal customs. The first was an obvious truth. The second is also equally true, for the duty on salt produced in Kohat area, which had been eight annas per *maund*, was raised to two rupees, the usual rate on the salt produced to the east of the Sindhu. The main reason was to do away with the costly procedure of guarding against the importation of Kohat salt to the eastern side of the Sindhu. The third had probably a reference to the fact that the British Government refused to hand over to the frontier peoples their women who had fled for protection to the British territory

There is evidence to show that the Mullahs played a large part in fomenting the troubles. As noted above, the Mullahs took a leading part in all the insurrections. Like all primitive people, the frontier tribes believed in the marvellous supernatural powers of the Mullahs, and were accustomed to pay implicit obedience to them. The following reply, given by one of the tribes to the appeal of the Commander of the British forces, may be said to represent very accurately the general sentiment of the tribes-people.

"Friendship and enmity are not in our choice; whatever orders we may receive from the Fakir Sahib of Swat, the Mulla Sahib of Hadda or the Aka Khel Mulla, and from all Islam, we cannot refuse to obey them; if we lose our lives, no matter".[21]

The Mullahs not only exploited the religious fanaticism of the people, but spread wild rumours, highly prejudicial to the British,

such as the capture of Aden and Suez canal by the Sultan of Turkey, rupture between the Germans and the English, and fighting against the British in Egypt. But the Mullahs could not have moved the heterogeneous mass of wild tribesmen to fight for a common cause merely by this sort of false propaganda. There seems to be little doubt that the Mullahs worked upon the inborn instincts of the tribal peoples, particularly their love of independence, and it is the strong aversion against the establishment of the British political control over them, of which the signs were abundantly clear, that made them subservient tools in the hands of the Mullahs who stood as the symbol of resistance against the hated rule of the foreigner *firinghis*

Indeed this was the crux of the whole tangled problem. The Forward Policy pursued since the days of Lord Lytton, and actively revived, after a short pause, by Lansdowne and Elgin, left no doubt in the minds of the tribes-people that the real intention of the British was to exercise effective control over them. The doubt, if there were any, was converted into certainty by the work of the Delimitation Commission. When the boundary pillars were erected and their fields were measured, the simple unsophisticated people naturally, and not unreasonably, concluded that their country was annexed and their independence gone.[22]

It would be hardly any exaggeration to say that the widespread tribal risings were a direct reaction to the policy of delimitation and demarcation by the Durand Line. This can be established by reference to a few historical facts.

The Boundary Commission knew fully well that its activities were extremely distasteful to the people. So, as a safeguard, it was accompanied by a strong military force. When it began its work in Southern Waziristan, it was protected by 3000 men and six guns. But this demarcation with the help of a military force naturally confirmed the worst suspicions of the people. So, as mentioned above, on November 3, 1894, the tribesmen suddenly attacked the camp of the Commission at Wana. They were repulsed with heavy loss, and by way of punishment, their villages were destroyed and their herds driven off. Similarly, when the Boundary Commission set to work in the northern area, in 1895, there were troubles in Chitral, as noted above.

It was urged by the British officials and historians that the Amir of Afghanistan was partly responsible for the risings of 1897. The book *Takwim-ud-din* "inspired by the Amir himself, and written to his command," which dealt with the *Jihad* (holy war), the assumption of the title of *Zia-ul-Millat wa ud-Din*, i.e. the Light of

Union and Faith, and reference to himself significantly in correspondence as the King of Islam, were cited as evidence for this. Ghulam Hyder Khan, the Commander-in-Chief of Amir, is also said to have "corresponded with the leading Mullahs on the border...instigated risings against us and helped the tribesmen with arms, ammunition and even men. Some think he was in touch with his master". Several other charges were also brought against the Amir, viz., that he had received deputations from the British tribal zone; his regular troops and subjects had joined the rebellious tribesmen, and he had held an assembly of Mullahs and impressed upon them the duty of all Muslims to destroy the infidels. The Amir denied these charges and allegations and it is difficult to form an impartial judgment on his conduct on the basis of British official evidence alone.[23]

But even assuming the allegation against the Amir to be true, it has to be admitted that the real cause of his disaffection also was the demarcation of the definite boundary between Afghanistan and India. The Amir did not like the idea, being quite satisfied with the existing state of things Certain tribes and sections—Mohmand country. Bajaur and Asmar—, which at least nominally acknowledged the Amir as the suzerain, were placed definitely under the British influence. But there was a deeper cause of anxiety. The existence of these wild tribes as independent buffer States was a safeguard to the dominions of Amir. It was certain that the British would build roads, gradually advance, absorb, dominate, destroy independence, and assume administration of the country, and, with the barriers of warlike tribes removed, would threaten his own independence

Attempts have been made to sidetrack the main issue by suggesting various extraneous causes for the tribal risings. Reference has been made to the general spirit of resistance against European aggression in the Islamic world, typified by the victory of Turkey over the Greeks and British discomfiture in the hands of the Arabs of Sudan. It is possible that these news, in an exaggerated form, were deliberately spread to lower the British prestige. It has been held by some that the general political unrest in India had its repercussion on the frontier tribes But the only concrete fact in support of it is that a young boy of about thirteen years of age was presented by a Mullah to the tribes as the only surviving heir to the throne of Delhi But while all these might show a malicious political design on the part of the leaders, it is difficult to believe that they had any material influence over the tribal peoples of the frontier.

Whatever one might think of these subsidiary causes and the influence of these secondary factors on the origin and nature of the

tribal risings of 1897-98, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that their real origin is to be found in the sturdy spirit of independence which characterized the Frontier tribesmen, and it was the imminent danger of losing freedom that induced them to make a common cause in a last desperate struggle to maintain it. It is refreshing to note that some liberal English writers have admitted this truth, however unpalatable it might be to the officials. The following lines by one of them admirably sum up this view:

"From the distant north, where the snows of Rakapushi keep watch over Hunza and Nagar, to the confines of Baluchistan, we had extended our authority in many directions over the debatable area, known as independent territory. To the border Pathan there appeared the vision of a great mailed fist, the fingers of which, in the 'nineties, seemed to be closing around him. Isolated forts garrisoned by British troops commanded the trade routes running through his territory, or frowned down upon his native hamlet or terraced fields. Dazzling white roads wound their way like serpents towards his fastnesses in the mountains. In the wake of demarcation commissions had sprung up long lines of white boundary pillars, enclosing his country and threatening that independence which was his proudest boast. It is therefore my considered opinion, after sifting all the available evidence, that the 1897 disturbances were mainly the result of the advances which had taken place in the 'nineties Although many of these advances were justified from a military point of view, they nevertheless were looked upon as encroachments into tribal territory."[24]

The risings of the frontier tribes in 1897-98 were suppressed by a number of separate British detachments sent in different directions and working independently of one another. By the time Lord Curzon succeeded Elgin as Governor-General in January, 1899, there was no insurrectionary movement anywhere in the frontier territories, though there were bitter memories, particularly of the Tirah campaign, and it left a blazing trail of disontent among the Afridis whose allowances were withdrawn as a penal measure. But a number of important strategic posts in different centres were still occupied by British troops, about ten thousand in number. These isolated posts had no communication with one another, and being far away from the regularly administered British area, were in great danger of being overwhelmed by a sudden recrudescence of tribal risings Elgin's Government decided to keep them there and build new forts in the tribal territory for their safety. But the Secretary of State, in his despatch dated January 28, 1898, sounded a note of warning against this policy which, in his opinion, would increase,

rather than diminish, the chances of collision with the tribes. He recommended a new Frontier Policy, based on the minimum of interference with the tribesmen in the neutral zone, and the maximum concentration of forces in secure areas. It was virtually a reversal of the Forward Policy and a swing back to the old 'Stationary Policy' in a modified form.

Lord Curzon, though an imperialist to the core, and supposed to be an ardent follower of the Forward School, had intimate personal knowledge of the Frontier, as he had travelled from the Pamirs to Chitral and thence to Kabul, Ghazni, Kandahar and Quetta less than five years before he became the Viceroy. He formulated a new Frontier Policy, more or less on the lines indicated by the Secretary of State. and defined it in his Budget speech on March 27, 1901. As he himself said, it was different from both the Forward Policy of the nineties and Lawrence's Policy of Masterly Inactivity or Back to the Indus. "Its main features," said he, "consist in the withdrawal of our regular troops from advanced positions in tribal territory, their concentration in posts upon or near to the Indian border, and their replacement in tribal tracts by bodies of tribal levies trained up by British officers to act as a militia in defence of their own native valleys and hills; in other words, the substitution of a policy of frontier garrisons drawn from the people themselves, for the costly experiment of large forts and isolated posts thrown forward into a turbulent and fanatical country."[25]

This policy, enunciated so early in his career, took a definite shape during the next three years, and in his Budget speech on March 30, 1904, Lord Curzon gave a long review of the net result of the operation of his new policy from Gilgit to Baluchistan. He defended the maintenance of the British garrison at Chitral, as "absolutely essential to the scheme of frontier defence." But the British troops had been reduced by one-third and concentrated at the extreme southern end of the country at Drosh. All the regular British troops were withdrawn from Gilgit, and the Kashmir Imperial Service troops took their place. In Dir and Swat, the movable column was withdrawn, and the British troops, reduced by one-half, were concentrated at Chakdarra, the headway of the bridge over the Swat, at Malakand and at Dargai, the outlying posts being held by local levies. Malakand was fortified, and Dargai was connected by a railway line with Nowshera, where a bridge was constructed over the Kabul river. The British garrison of 3,700 men at the Khyber Pass were withdrawn and it was left in charge of two battalions of Khyber Rifles. raised from the Afridis of the Pass and neighbouring tribes, officered by Englishmen. Kohat was connected

with the Indian railway, and by road, through the Kohat Pass, with Peshawar. The British garrison at Sama were replaced by Samana Rifles. A railway line was opened from Kohat to Thal at the mouth of the Kurram valley, and the regular British force was replaced by the Kurram Militia commanded by British officers.

In Waziristan alone Curzon met with troubles from the Mahsuds, who carried their raids into British territory. In 1901 Curzon adopted a policy of strict blockade, "vigorously and unremittingly pursued, and followed by a series of sharp and unexpected punitive counter-raids into the Mahsud valleys." The Mahsuds submitted, but the total loss suffered by them in fines, forfeiture of allowances, rifles surrendered, and the value of property destroyed and livestock captured, was calculated by Curzon to be more than five *lakhs*.[26]

In spite of all this, Curzon decided to withdraw the total British garrison of 4,000 and leave the line of the Tochi and the Gomal to the charge, respectively, of North Waziristan and South Waziristan Militia. Summing up the whole position Lord Curzon said that there were in 1904, only 5,000 British troops in place of 10,200 beyond the administration border of British India, but the supporting garrisons within this border have been increased from 22,000 to 24,000 and strengthened by new railway connections. The tribal military organization consisted of "Levies over 1,000 strong, Border Military Police over 3,000, and Border Militia, 5,800"

Lord Curzon tried to placate and conciliate the border-tribes by meeting their Chiefs and explaining the benevolent attitude of his Government to them. In a *Durbar* at Peshawar held on April 26, 1902, he addressed the Chiefs and representatives of the Frontier tribes. He assured them that the British Government had no wish to seize their territory or interfere with their independence. The tribesmen would be left in peace in their possessions so long as they did not raid or attack other's dominions, but if they did so, and if the tribes did not help the Government to mend matters, the British force would be sent to suppress all disorder. The second feature of the British policy was the payment of tribal allowances for keeping open the roads and passes, such as the Khyber and Kohat Passes and the Chitral Road, for the maintenance of peace and tranquillity, and for the punishment of crime. The third feature was the extended military employment of the tribesmen in the local Levies and Militia which opened a manly and well-paid career to several thousands of their young men. By good services they might be enlisted in the regular army. The railway lines, the fourth feature, were no doubt primarily intended to ensure quick movement

of troops in times of trouble, but they would provide security to the tribal militia by pushing troops quickly to their support. These railways would also have a good effect upon the trade so dear to the Pathans. As these railways were within the British territory, the tribesmen were told not to feel nervous about British encroachments on their freedom, but that they would do well to remember that the railway would not only help the British to come to their support in need, but also to strike and avenge any wrong they might be guilty of.[27]

The Frontier policy of Curzon led him to introduce an important administrative change by creating a new North-West Frontier Province directly under the Government of India. He regarded it as an integral part of his new Frontier policy, "the Keystone of the Frontier Arch". Lord Lytton had proposed to create a new province consisting of the six frontier districts of the Punjab and of the trans-Indus districts of Sindh. But the Punjab Government was strongly opposed to it. Lord Lansdowne revived the scheme, and discussions went on till Curzon took up the question seriously. He regarded a separate Frontier Province directly under his supervision as an absolute necessity in the circumstances The Viceroy was also the Minister for Foreign Affairs, but between the frontier system and the Viceroy there was placed the Government of the Punjab, "through whose hands all frontier questions had to pass before they reached the Government of India". This meant considerable delay, and weeks and even months passed before the Viceroy's decision was received. This was specially objectionable as "rapidity of action and swiftness of action were essential on an exposed frontier." Lord Curzon regarded as 'irrational in theory and bizarre in practice', the system which "interposes between its Foreign Minister and his most important sphere of activity, the barrier, not of a subordinate official, but of a subordinate Government," which neither originated nor was responsible for India's foreign policy.[28]

After discussing various schemes and suggestions Curzon created in 1901 a new administrative unit out of the frontier districts of the Punjab. This unit, the North-West Frontier Province, consisted of the settled districts of Hazara, Peshawar, Kohat, Bannu, and Dera Ismail Khan, as well as the frontier tracts between the administrative boundary and the Durand Line. Excepting the small *tahsil* of Isa Khel, whose inhabitants were not Pathans, all the trans-Indus territories were included in the new Province, the head of which was a Chief Commissioner and Agent to the Governor-General, appointed by, and responsible to, the Governor-General.

Judged by the results, Lord Curzon's Frontier policy must be regarded as successful. In a speech at the United Service Club at Simla on September 30, 1905, he reminded his audience that "for seven years we have not had a single frontier expedition, the only seven years of which this can be said since the frontier passed into British hands; and that, whereas in the five years 1894-99 the Indian tax-payer had to find 4½ million pounds sterling for frontier warfare, the total cost of military operations on the entire North-West Frontier, in the last seven years has only been £248,000, and that was for the semi-pacific operation of the Mahsud blockade."[29] This is a record, following the events of 1897-98, of which the Viceroy could legitimately feel proud.

1 C C Davies, *The Problem of the North-West Frontier, 1890-1908*, p 22
2. Ibid, 27.
3 Warner, I. 393 ff.
4 Ibid, 396
5 Ibid, 392
6 Ibid, 396.
7 Davies, op cit, 24-6
8 Ibid, 26
9 Ibid
9a See p 892
9b See p 676
10 See p 681
11. Col. Sir T H Holdich, *The Indian Borderland*, 232-3.
12. Ibid, 230-1.
13 *The Autobiography of Abd-ur-rahman*, quoted in Davies, op cit., p 160.
14 Holdich, op. cit, 229.
15 Ibid, 230
16 The account of the tribes is based on Davies, op cit, pp 58-68
17 Ibid, 80-1.
18. Ibid, 84-88
19 The arguments of the two opposing schools are summarized by Davies (op. cit, pp. 86-88).
20 Ibid, 89
21 Ibid, 97
22 Col. H. D. Hutchinson, *The Campaign in Tirah (1897-8) under General Sir William Lockhart* (1898), p. 9.
23 Ibid, pp 12 ff
24 Davies, op cit., 97-8.
25 Sir Thomas Raleigh, *Lord Curzon in India*, pp. 416-7.
26 Ibid, 419-32
27. Ibid, 423.
28 Davies, op cit, 108
29. Ibid, 115.

CHAPTER XXXII

NORTH-EASTERN FRONTIER

I. BHUTAN

The first attempt of the British Government of India to establish friendly relations with Bhutan was the result of strained relations between Bhutan and Cooch Behar towards the close of the eighteenth century. In earlier times the relations between Cooch Behar and Bhutan were always very intimate, and Bhutan exercised considerable control over Cooch Behar affairs. "About 1695 the Bhutanese overran Cooch Behar and usurped the government till Santa Narayan Nazir Deo, with the assistance of the Mahomedan Viceroy, expelled them after a long struggle, and placed Rup Narayan on the throne The Bhutanese, however, continued their control over political affairs in Cooch Behar".[1] In 1772, the Bhutanese invaded Cooch Behar and carried off the Raja with the intention of placing on the throne a ruler of their own choice The Cooch Behar ruling family solicited British aid. A small British force drove the Bhutanese out of Cooch Behar and captured the fort of Buxa. The Bhutanese then sought the help of Tashi Lama, the Regent of Tibet, who wrote a friendly letter to the Governor-General, Warren Hastings, in 1774. As a result of his intercession a treaty was made between the Government of India and Bhutan on 25th April, 1774. The tribute of five Tangan horses, which had been paid by Bhutan to the Cooch Behar Raja for the province of Falakata, was transferred to the East India Company. This ended all political relations between Bhutan and Cooch Behar The Bhutanese merchants were allowed the same privileges of trade, free of duty, as formerly, with permision for their caravans to go to Rangpur annually. The Deb Raja, as the ruler of Bhutan was called, agreed to abstain from encouraging incursions into the Company's country and to submit all disputes between Bhutan and the Company's subjects to the decision of the Company's Magistrate. Taking advantage of the friendly attitude of Tashi Lama, Warren Hastings sent a Mission under Bogle to Tibet. The Mission started on 6th May, 1774, and Bogle was successful in gaining the consent of the Deb Raja to the passage of trade, free of duty, through his country. Articles of trade agreement between the two Governments were drawn up, and for a few years trade from Bengal was actually allowed to pass through Bhutan into Tibet.

Two small Missions under Hamilton almost immediately followed on this important Mission of Bogle. In 1775 Warren Hastings sent Hamilton to Bhutan to examine into the claims of the Deb Raja to Falakata and Julpaish (now in Jalpaiguri district). Hamilton came to a conclusion in favour of the Deb Raja's rights. In 1777 he was sent again to Bhutan to congratulate a new Deb Raja on his succession.

In 1783 Warren Hastings sent Captain Turner as his envoy to the court of the infant Lama of Tibet. Turner was also charged with letters to the Deb Raja requesting him to keep his engagements under the articles of trade concluded by Bogle. Thus Warren Hastings, by his policy of sending Missions to Tibet and Bhutan, succeeded in establishing friendly relations with these two countries, and in opening trade through the one country to the other. But in 1792, when the Gurkhas of Nepal invaded Tibet and a Chinese army drove them out, the Chinese suspected that the Indian Government had supported the Gurkhas and, in consequence, they closed all the passes of Tibet to natives of India. This was the end of the policy of establishing good relations with Tibet. Meanwhile the friendly relations of the Indian Government with Bhutan also began to wane, due to border disputes. In 1815, some disputes occurred regarding the Bhutan frontier boundaries, and Babu Kishan Kant Bose was deputed to the court of Bhutan. He has left an interesting report of the country as he found it.

It was particularly after the First Anglo-Burmese War of 1825-26 that the relations between the Government of India and Bhutan became strained. The British drove the Burmese out of Assam and cast covetous eyes on the narrow strip of territory (at the base of the lower ranges of the Bhutan hills), about twenty miles wide and extending from the Dhansiri river in Assam, on the east, to the river Tista, on the west. It covered an area of about one thousand square miles which was intersected by a number of passes or *duars* (door) leading from the hills to the plain. There are seven such *Duars* on the frontier of Assam, and eleven on the frontier of Bengal.[2] From this fact the whole of the narrow strip of territory, which is by nature singularly rich and fertile, was known as the Bhutan Duars. "These Duars contain some of the finest cotton and timber lands in Bengal". Ashley Eden, who was later sent as an envoy to Bhutan, thus wrote in his report about the advantages of the occupation of the Duars: "The Province is one of the finest in India and under our Government would in a few years become one of the wealthiest. It is the only place I have seen in India in which the theory of European settlement could, in my opinion, take a really practical

form".[3] Thus economic factors as well as strategic considerations (to have a well-defined frontier marching along the foot of the hills) led to the British control over the Duars. It was after the Anglo-Burmese War of 1825-26 that disputes over the Duars began with the Bhutan Government. The Assam Duars were occupied by the Bhutanese on payment of annual tributes. The British Government of India renewed and confirmed the engagements made with the Bhutanese by the Assamese. These engagements were of a somewhat complicated nature and were well calculated to produce the misunderstanding which at a very early date arose between the two Governments. In the first place, though five Assam Duars were held exclusively by the Bhutanese, two Duars (Guma and Kalling) were held under a very peculiar tenure, for the British Government, like the Ahom rulers, occupied them from July to November each year, while the Bhutanese held them for the remainder of the year Secondly, as the tribute was payable in kind, disputes arose as to the value of the articles paid by way of tribute. Thus the relations of the Government of India with Bhutan were not placed on a satisfactory basis. To improve these relations a Mission under Captain Pemberton was sent to Bhutan in 1837, but no amicable adjustment took place. Pemberton's report, however, supplied valuable information about Bhutan. As, on account of internal troubles, Bhutan was remiss in payment of annual tributes, and outrages like plunder and kidnapping continued, Lord Auckland, the Governor-General of India, authorized the annexation of the Assam Duars in 1841 on payment of Rs. 10,000 per annum to the Bhutan Government as compensation.

The Government of India then turned its attention to the unsatisfactory nature of the Bengal Duars frontier. The Bhutias frequently committed outrages on this frontier also, in course of which property was plundered and destroyed, and men were killed and carried into captivity. Consequently, in 1855, when Tongsa Penlop (the most powerful chieftain in Bhutan who was king *de facto*) assumed a threatening attitude, Lord Dalhousie, the Governor-General of India, took up a strong attitude and the Bhutan Government offered a suitable apology. A British cantonment was established on this frontier at Jalpaiguri, in order to restrain the Bhutiyas, but their depredations continued. The long-continued aggressions of the Bhutiyas induced Lord Canning to consider seriously the question of despatching an expedition into Bhutan, but it was postponed on account of the outbreak of the Mutiny in 1857. After peace and order were restored, the attention of the Government of India was again drawn to the Bhutia outrages. As a punitive measure, the

Government withheld the annual payment of two thousand Rupees which they had hitherto been paying on account of the Ambari Falakata *Taluk*, a Bhutiya territory situated on the west bank of the Tista, within the district of Rangpur, but administered by the British. This annual payment, stopped in 1860, was frequently demanded by the Bhutiyas, who committed further depredations. At the beginning of 1862 the Bhutiyas were reported to have been making military preparations for forcibly occupying Ambari Falakata, and British forces were despatched from Danapur to Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri. This considerably eased the situation and the Government of India decided to send Sir Ashley Eden as an envoy to Bhutan for the amicable adjustment of all matters of dispute and to revise and improve the relations existing between the two Governments. He was specially instructed to demand the surrender of the captives taken and the restoration of the property plundered from British territory, and also that security should be given for the future peace of the frontier. Eden left for Bhutan towards the close of 1863 with an escort of 100 men under the command of Captain Lance The Bhutanese Government, which was really in the hands of Tongsa Penlop, put all kinds of obstacles in Eden's way and rejected all his demands. The British "envoy was insulted in open *darbar* and compelled as the only means of ensuring the safe return of the Mission, to sign under protest a document for the renunciation of the Bhutan Duars situated in Assam frontier". Eden and his party, however, managed to escape at night and returned to Darjeeling in April, 1864. After making further futile attempts to induce Bhutan to accept their demands, the Government of India issued a proclamation on 12 November, 1864. After narrating the history of Bhutiya outrages culminating in the insult offered to the British envoy, Sir Ashley Eden, the proclamation continues: "For this insult the Governor-General in Council determined to withhold for ever the annual payments previously made to the Bhutan Government on account of the revenues of the Assam Duars and Ambari Falakata, which had long been in the occupation of the British Government, and annexed those districts permanently to the British territory."

The British Government also decided to annex the Bengal Duars of Bhutan and so much of the hill territory, including the forts of Dalingkote, Pasaka, and Dewangiri, as might be necessary to command the passes. Accordingly a military force was sent and all the above forts were occupied, without much resistance, by the middle of January, 1865. The Bhutiyas, however, scored two notable successes; they recaptured Dewangiri and occupied Tazigong by

forcing the British to evacuate them. Both these places were afterwards re-taken, and the newly annexed Duars of Bhutan were occupied by a strong military force, cutting off Bhutan from all communication with the plains, both in Assam and Bengal. As the Bhutan Government still refused to treat except upon the basis of the surrender of the annexed terrtiory, the Government of India decided to send an expedition into the interior of Bhutan after the rainy season was over. Before this expedition actually began any operations, overtures were made on the part of the Bhutan Rajas that they were anxious to enter into negotiations for peace, and a treaty was made on 11th November, 1865. The Government of India agreed, in return for the Duars, to pay to the Bhutan Government an annual sum of Rs. 25,000 in the first year, Rs. 35,000 for the second, Rs. 45,000 for the third, and Rs. 50,000 on every succeeding year. The payment of this sum, liable as it was to stoppage in the event of misconduct on the part of the Bhutan Government or its failure to check the aggression of its subjects, was an excellent and powerful guarantee for its good conduct. The Bhutan Government agreed to surrender all British subjects of Sikkim and Cooch Behar detained in Bhutan against their will; to the mutual extradition of criminals; to the maintenance of free trade; and to the arbitration of the Government of India in all disputes between the Bhutan Government and the Chiefs of Cooch Behar and Sikkim The Bhutanese also agreed to deliver up the two guns which had fallen into the hands of Tongsa Penlop, after the re-capture of Dewangiri.[3a]

This treaty is an important landmark in the relations between the Bhutan Government and the Government of India. The '18 Duars' was ceded to the Government of India, and this narrow strip of territory, lying at the foot of the hills, was, as stated above, not only very fertile but also possessed strategic importance. The relations with Bhutan have been amicable since the signing of the treaty. Of course, there were minor causes of dispute. Payment of the allowance to the Bhutan Government was temporarily withheld in 1868, as the Bhutan Government stopped intercommunication between Bhutan and Buza and also sent an officer of inferior rank to receive the subsidy in disregard of Article 4 of the treaty. In 1880 the Bhutan Government was again warned that the subsidy would be withheld unless certain raiders in Chunabati, near Buxa, were handed over to the Government of India. Eventually, the demands were complied with, the raiders delivered up, and the captives (British subjects who had been carried off) released in July, 1881.

Apart from these two incidents, the relations with Bhutan have been friendly. In 1888, when war broke out between the Govern-

ment of India and Tibet, the ruler of Bhutan refused assistance to the Tibetans. During the Tibet Mission of 1904, the Bhutanese were called upon for open support, and their Government sent a Mission with General Macdonald in his advance on Lhasa.

Up to 1904 the political relations between Bhutan and the Indian Government had been carried on through the medium of the Government of Bengal. On hostilities breaking out with Tibet in that year. these political relations were transferred from Bengal to Colonel Younghusband, who corresponded direct with the Government of India. On the termination of the Mission, these political relations were transferred to the Political Officer of Sikkim, who was also entrusted with the political relations with Tibet. This was a change of great importance, as it brought Sikkim, Bhutan and Tibet in direct relationship with the Government of India, and thus avoided the unnecessary tedious delays formerly caused by the correspondence through the local government.

II. NEPAL

Reference has been made above[3b] to the Anglo-Gurkha War which broke out in 1814 and was ended by the Treaty of Segowli on 4 March, 1816. Since then the relation between the two States was, generally speaking, friendly, but there were occasional ill feelings, and things even went so far that war between the two countries seemed imminent and was only prevented with great difficulty. By 1839 the war party in Nepal, represented by the senior queen and the Panre family, got control over the administration and ousted the weak and incapable king from any participation in public affairs. In 1840 the senior queen ordered an invasion of the British territory. The Gurkhas occupied nearly a hundred villages in the district of Ramnagar. Hodgson, the British Resident at Katmandu, acted with energy. He demanded the immediate withdrawal of troops, compensation, and an apology. The queen incited the troops in Katmandu to mutiny, but the coup failed. The Government of India sent an ultimatum whereupon the Gurkhas withdrew from Ramnagar, and the Panre Government was replaced by a coalition Government favourable to the British alliance. The death of the queen in 1841 strengthened the peace party. The alliance between the Government of India and Nepal was restored, and the King of Nepal even offered the services of the Nepalese army for use in Burma or in Afghanistan. The British relations with Nepal were still further improved when Jang Bahadur became the Prime Minister in 1846. He was by far the most remarkable Prime Minister of Nepal. He was shrewd enough to understand the importance of maintaining friendly rela-

tions with his powerful neighbour in the south. In May, 1848, he offered the services of six regiments of Nepalese troops in the event of war breaking out between the English and the Sikhs. The Indian Government declined the offer, but stated that they would accept it, should need arise on any future occasion.

Jang Bahadur tried to increase the influence of Nepal by declaring war on Tibet. The war was ended by the treaty signed at Katmandu on the 24th March, 1856. Nepal gained valuable concessions—the payment of an annual indemnity by the Tibetans of ten thousand Rupees, freedom of trade to Nepalese subjects in Tibet, the abolition of customs duties on all goods entering Tibet, and the appointment of a Nepalese representative at Lhasa to protect the interests of Nepalese subjects in that city.

During the Mutiny Jang Bahadur demonstrated his friendship to the British by despatching a large force to co-operate with the British force operating against Lakhnau, an important stronghold of the revolt. Three thousand Nepalese troops swept on through Awadh as far as Chanda and Sohanpur, thereby preventing any chance of a flank attack on the British troops marching towards Lakhnau. Later, Jang Bahadur took the field in person at the head of 9,000 men He captured Gorakhpur in January, 1858 Two months later, the Gurkhas took a prominent part in the battle of Lakhnau. Later, when the defeated rebel chiefs fled to Nepal, Jang Bahadur took effective measures to disarm and disperse them. Jang Bahadur not only helped the British Government of India in crushing the rebellion, but also authorized the raising of more Gurkha battalions for the Indian army. As a reward for his services the Government of India restored to Nepal a large part of the former Gurkha possessions in the Terai, which had been ceded to the British in 1816.

From this time onward the relations of Nepal with the Government of India continued to be friendly. Nepal was fortunate in having very able Prime Ministers who not only tried to improve the economic condition of Nepal but also maintained good relations with the Government of India.

III. MANIPUR

1. *Political Control of Burma*

Manipur, wedged in between Assam and Burma, guarded the north-east frontier of India, and no wonder that India and Burma were rivals for this territory of great strategic importance. Long before the advent of the British in India, Burma had asserted her supremacy over Manipur. It was about the middle of the sixteenth

century that Bayinnaung, the most powerful ruler of the Toungoo dynasty of Burma, reduced Manipur to a tributary State. But subsequently Manipur re-asserted her independence and even made occasional raids into Burma. Thus Gharib Niwaz, the most powerful ruler of Manipur, led several successful expeditions into Burma in 1725, 1735, 1738, 1739 and in 1749. Due to disunity among the successors of Gharib Niwaz, however, Manipur lost her independence and was again subjected to the political control of Burma. "From 1755 A.D. up to the treaty of Yandaboo in 1826 A D. the history of Manipur is replete with the story of successive Burmese invasions and of how she resisted them and eventually triumphed over them".[4] The increasing power of Burma alarmed the British Government in India. In 1759 the ruler of Burma destroyed the English settlement in Negrais, an island at the mouth of the Irrawaddy. Shortly after this, Haridas Gossain met Mr. Verelst at Chittagong to secure British help for his master, Jai Singh, to regain the lost territories of Manipur from Burma. The terms of the alliance were settled on 14th September, 1762. This was the first formal agreement between the Government of Manipur and the British Government of India A British contingent of troops was to be sent to help Jai Singh in recovering the territories wrested from Manipur by Burma. In return, the Government of Manipur agreed to grant for ever to the English rent-free land at a suitable place in Manipur for the establishment of a factory and a fort, and also provide every facility for the promotion of trade with China. The Government of Manipur agreed to pay the expenses of the British contingent of troops and also to compensate the English for the loss suffered by them at the island of Negrais. A clause of offensive and defensive alliance was included in the treaty. The British contingent, however, suffered from rain and disease and had to return without achieving any success. Manipur continued to be under the control of Burma. Jai Singh made many attempts to recover Manipur, but failed in his efforts. Ultimately he came to an understanding with the Burmese ruler and was allowed to rule over Manipur. In the war of succession amongst the sons of Jai Singh, the Burmese ruler espoused the cause of Marjit. In 1812 Marjit occupied the throne of Manipur as a vassal of Burma. But in 1818-1819, when he showed signs of independence. a Burmese army occupied Manipur. Marjit fled from Manipur and, with the help of his brothers, secured Cachar. Govinda Chandra, the deposed ruler of Cachar, finding no hope of getting any help from the British, sought the help of the Burmese. In 1823 a Burmese force invaded Cachar through Manipur. Marjit fled to Sylhet.

Meanwhile, taking advantage of the internal dissensions in Assam, a Burmese force entered the country in 1817 and placed their nominee Chandra Kanta Singh on the throne. When Chandra Kanta Singh showed signs of independence, large Burmese forces under the command of Bandula poured into Assam in 1821 and defeated him. How these incursions ultimately led to the Anglo-Burmese War, has been stated above.[6]

2. *Gambhir Singh*

The First Anglo-Burmese war broke out in 1824. The British forces drove out the Burmese forces from Cachar. Then the British entered into an agreement with the Manipur princes. In return for help the British agreed to support Gambhir Singh, one of the Manipur princes, to regain the throne of Manipur. The Burmese forces were driven out of Manipur. The war came to a close by the Treaty of Yandabo (24th February, 1826) which recognized Gambhir Singh's title to the throne of Manipur. But there was some confusion about the nature of his sovereignty It was stated in Article II "His Majesty the King of Ava renounced all claims upon and will abstain from all future interference with the principality of Assam and its dependencies and also with the contiguous petty states of Cachar and Jynteea With regard to Manipur, it is stipulated that should Gambhir Singh desire to return to that country, he shall be recognized by the King of Ava as Raja thereof"

It was not clarified whether Gambhir Singh should be treated as the Sovereign ruler of Manipur or as a vassal king under Burma The British, however, were anxious not to allow Manipur to remain a dependency of Burma, for the Burmese political control over Manipur would expose the Sylhet frontier to the danger which had precipitated the war in 1824. Negotiations with the Burmese led to a happy settlement; the Burmese renounced their sovereignty over Manipur and their incursions extending over sixty years at last came to an end There was nothing to indicate that Gambhir Singh, who thus became ruler of Manipur, acknowledged the suzerainty of the British, though the Government of India regarded Manipur as a protected state. This question has already been discussed above in Ch. XXVII. For the time being, however, close and intimate friendly relations were established between Manipur and British India, and it was but natural and inevitable that the petty rulers of Manipur would be subservient to their powerful neighbour.

During the military operations of the First Burmese War, Gambhir Singh had occupied the Kubo valley inhabited by the Shans. The Burmese claimed this territory, and Gambhir Singh referred it

to the decision of the British, who upheld the claims of Burma. Gambhir Singh reluctantly agreed, and the Kabo valley was transferred to Burma in 1834. The Government of India, conscious of the just claims of Gambhir Singh which had to be sacrificed for placating Burma, agreed to pay Rs. 500 per month to Manipur State as compensation.

Manipur had been devastated by the successive invasions of Burma for more than sixty years. At the time when Gambhir Singh became the independent ruler of Manipur, its adult male population did not exceed 2000. Reference has been made to Gambhir Singh's unsuccessful effort to get possession of Cachar after the death of its ruler Govinda Chandra.[6] But though weak in resources Manipur had a stable government. The economic and military alliance between Manipur and British Government was established, and its nature was clearly defined by a number of resolutions adopted by both in 1833.

3 *Chandrakirti Singh*

Gambhir Singh died in 1834, leaving a son, Chandrakirti, only two years old. So Nar Singh, a great-grandson of Gharib Niwaz and a former Senapati (Commander-in-chief) of Gambhir Singh, became the Regent and carried on the administration with great ability. But Maharani Kumudini Devi, the mother of Chandrakirti, suspected Nar Singh as having designs upon the throne. In 1844 a plot was hatched to murder Nar Singh, but it failed. He suspected the complicity of the Maharani in the attempt on his life and usurped the throne. The Maharani, with Chandrakirti, fled to Cachar and threw themselves under the protection of the British. But the British Government did not like to interfere in the internal affairs of Manipur. On the death of Nar Singh in 1850, Chandrakirti sent a petition to the Government of India for his restoration to the throne, but without waiting for a reply advanced from Cachar and seized the throne, while Devendra Singh, brother and successor of Nar Singh, fled to Cachar.

But troubles continued in Manipur owing to the hostile activities of Debendra Singh's followers and the consequent chaos in internal administration. The Political Agent at Manipur recommended that the British Government should recognize Chandrakirti Singh as the ruler of Manipur. In 1852, the Government of India had authorized the Political Agent to make "a public avowal of the determination of the British Government to uphold the present Raja, and to resist and punish any parties attempting hereafter to dispossess him." Primarily interested in the maintenance of law

and order in this important State on the frontier of India, the Government of India was naturally anxious to maintain the Maharaja in power. The Secretary of State for India, however, took a wider view of the subject, for he felt that this British guarantee would mean that the Maharaja would feel secure even if there was maladministration. The Secretary of State was, therefore, of the view that this guarantee must be accompanied by interference in the internal affairs of the State to ensure good administration to the people. Therefore he issued the following instructions to the Government of India:

"Considering the very unfavourable reports of the Raja's administration hitherto given by Captain McCulloch, we feel considerable doubt of the propriety of having bound yourselves to his support. The position, however, which you have thus assumed of pledged protectors of the Raja imposes on you as a necessary consequence the obligation not only of attempting to guide him by your advice, but, if needful, of protecting his subjects against oppression on his part; otherwise our guarantee of his rule may be the cause of inflicting on them a continuance of reckless tyranny The obligation thus incurred may be found embarrassing, but it must nevertheless be fulfilled, and while needless interference is of course to be avoided, we shall expect that, as the price of the protection afforded to him, the Raja will submit to our maintaining a sufficient check over the general conduct of his administration, so as to prevent it from being oppressive to the people and discreditable to the Government which gives it support"[7] This was, no doubt, the thin end of the wedge by which the British sought to extend its authority over the State of Manipur which never acknowledged the suzerainty of the British nor theoretically regarded itself as a dependent State No occasion, however, arose for British interference in the internal affairs of Manipur during the reign of Chandrakirtti Singh. He actively helped the British during the outbreak of 1857 and was rewarded by a dress of honour, sword, and belt; eight of his chief officers received Khilat. The Mutiny Medal was presented to one of the military officers who actually fought against the mutineers and captured a number of the mutineers of Chittagong who proceeded towards Manipur On the other hand, the British alliance stood Chandrakirti in good stead in suppressing chronic rebellions and outbreaks in his kingdom.

4. *The Naga Hills.*

The Manipur State exercised authority over a considerable part of the Naga Hills. But during its period of decadence caused by the

Burmese aggressions (A.D. 1755-1826) Manipur lost whatever influence it had over the interior of Naga Hills. In 1832 Captain Jenkins and Pemberton, escorted by Gambhir Singh and his troops, forced a passage through the hills in order to find a suitable route to Assam. At that time Gambhir Singh re-asserted the authority of Manipur over that area and reduced to submission several villages, including Kohima, the largest of them. In 1833 when the Angami Nagas started giving trouble to the British, Gambhir Singh with his forces again subdued Kohima.[8]

'Geographically there is no lime of demarcation between Manipur and Naga Hills. A vague boundary between the two was laid down in 1842 by Lt. Biggs from the British side and Captain Gordon on the part of the Manipur Government. But the Nagas of that locality never cared for this boundary. At last in 1851 the Government of India, angered by Naga raids, allowed the Manipur Government to extend its authority over the Naga villages on the other side of the Biggs-Gordon line'.[9] The British also claimed a part of the Naga Hills and had a Political Agent to administer the area. But his actual authority was confined to Samaguting, his headquarters, and its immediate neighbourhood. The Nagas living in unadministered areas often came into clash with those in administered areas, and in 1877 an expedition was sent to quell a rebellious outbreak in Mozzuma village. James Johnstone, the Political Agent of Manipur, accompanied by a minister of that State, proceeded with an army to the help of the Political Agent of Naga Hills The Nagas approached Chandrakirti, the ruler of Manipur for help, but the latter refused and admonished them to surrender, and the rebellion at Mozzuma subsided In 1878 the Political Agent of Naga Hills removed his headquarters to Kohima, but it was invaded by the Angami Nagas in October 1879. The rebellion spread like wildfire, and a grave situation arose, calling for immediate succour. Once again Johnstone, the Political Agent of Manipur, advanced to the rescue of Kohima, with the troops of the Residency, accompanied by 2000 Manipur troops under Tikendrajit, the third son of Chandrakirti. The British camp was saved and gradually the rebellion was suppressed. Johnstone has put on record his appreciation of the services rendered by Manipur at this grave crisis. "It is difficult", said he, "to over-estimate our obligation to the Maharaja for his loyal conduct during the insurrection and subsequent troubles. According to his own belief, we had deprived him of territory belonging to him, and which he had been allowed to claim as his own. The Nagas asked him to help them, and promised to become his feudatories, if only he would not act against them. The

temptation must have been strong, to at least serve us as we deserved, by leaving us in the lurch to get out of the mess as best as we could. Instead of this, Chandra Kirti Singh loyally and cheerfully placed his resources at our disposal, and certainly by enabling me to march to its relief, prevented the fall of Kohima, and the disastrous result which would have inevitably followed".[10]

5. *Manipur as a British protectorate.*

The death of Chandrakirti in 1886 was followed by internal dissensions, leading to the armed resistance of the Manipur royal family to the British Government in India This episode and its tragic consequences have been dealt at some length in Chapter XXVII, partly to remove popular misconceptions about what is usually, but wrongly, called the "Manipur Rebellion", and partly to illustrate the practical application of the theory of paramountcy, in respect of independent Hill States on the north-eastern frontier.

As mentioned above, the armed resistance of Manipur was of short duration, and by the end of April, 1891, i.e. within a month, Manipur was occupied by a British force Senapati Tikendrajit was executed and Maharaja Kulachandra was transported for life to the Andamans The question of annexing the State or restoring it to some member of the Maharaja's family was thoroughly discussed in the Viceroy's Executive Council. The Chief Commissioner, in his note dated 16th July, 1891, had strongly recommended the annexation of the State. "In the first place I take it as an accepted axiom of our foreign policy in India, that if a Native State wages war against the Queen, that alone (leaving out of consideration for the present the question of expediency) is a sufficient and justifiable ground for annexing the State to British territory We have had more than one practical instance in recent years of the application of this axiom, the most recent being the annexation to British territory in Burma of the Shan State of Wuntho".[11]

The Chief Commissioner maintained that as Manipur was not an independent but protected State, and owed its very existence to the protection which the Government of India had afforded to it 'for years past', the Government of India had exercised the right of interfering in the internal affairs of the State to safeguard their interests. "We do not, it is true, ordinarily interfere with the internal affairs of the State, but, in consideration of the protection which we have always given to the Maharaja and our promise to maintain him on the *gaddi* against all who might seek to dispossess him, we have always insisted on our right to compel him to do, or to abstain from doing, certain things, e. g., he must not obstruct trade between

Manipur and British territory, or exact heavy duties, or create monopolies; he must not supply arms to hill tribes that are hostile to the British Government; he must not disturb the frontier by acts of aggression against hill tribes lying beyond the Manipur boundary; we compel him to maintain the road from the confines of the Cachar district to Manipur; we insist on his supplying labour to us whenever called upon to do so; we insist upon his punishing his officers of State, officers of the Manipur army, and others who are known to have committed acts of atrocity, even though such acts may have been committed within the limits of the State; we will not permit him to oppress his subjects, or to allow his subjects to oppress British subjects; and lastly, he is bound to assist us with the troops if we ever have occasion in an emergency to call upon him for such assistance".

The policy of annexation was also supported by some members of the Viceroy's Executive Council, but did not find favour with the Viceroy. The Viceroy agreed that the Government had a moral right to annex the State, for it had been guilty of rebellion, but he favoured the policy of inflicting sufficient punishment on the State without annexing it. "I am on principle strongly opposed to needless annexations, and I would have a scrupulous regard for the independence of the Native States in subordinate alliance with us, so long as they remain loyal, and do nothing to forfeit their right to our protection. The onus should, I think, always be upon those who advocate annexation, and it lies with them to show that no other course will satisfy the claims of justice and public policy. I would, therefore, in the contingency which we are supposing, pass sentence of extinction upon the Manipur State in the most solemn manner. I would revoke all existing *sanads*, and I would re-grant to a new Ruler, whom we shall select, a carefully limited amount of authority under conditions which could for all time render it impossible for any Manipuri to contend, as Mr. Ghose has contended,[12] that the State is one enjoying sovereign rights, and therefore not owing any allegiance to Her Majesty. The new *sanad* should, on the contrary, place Manipur in a position of distinct subordination, and any privileges conceded should be made to continue only during the good behaviour of the Ruler, and the pleasure of the Government of India."[13]

In pursuance of this principle the Government of India appointed Chura Chand (a minor) as the ruler of Manipur. In the *sanad* given to him it was mentioned that "the chiefship of the Manipur State will be hereditary and will descend in the direct line," provided that in each case the succession was approved of by the Gov-

ernment of India. Chura Chand and his successors were to pay an annual tribute. Further, the "permanence of the grant conveyed by this *sanad*" was to depend upon the ready fulfilment "of all orders given by the British Government with regard to the administration of your territories, the control of the hill tribes dependent upon Manipur, the composition of the armed forces of the State, and any other matters in which the British Government may be pleased to intervene." Thus the *sanad* provided for the complete subordination of the Manipur State. This aspect of the policy was emphasized by the Government of India in their letter (dated 21st September, 1891) addressed to the Chief Commissioner of Assam: "You will observe that it provides for the complete subordination of the Manipur State".[14] For "the treacherous attack on British Officers", a fine of Rs. 2,50,000 was imposed. The administration of the State during the minority of the Maharaja was entrusted to a Superientendent and a Political Agent, who was given full power to introduce any reforms that he considered beneficial, but with instructions to pay due regard to the customs and traditions of the Manipuris and to interfere as little as possible with the existing institutions. Thus, towards the close of the nineteenth century the Government of India tightened its grip over this important State, guarding the north-east frontier of India.

IV. LUSHAI HILLS

The eastern frontier, bordering on the Sylhet and Cachar Districts, was frequently raided by the savage Lushai and Kuki tribes inhabiting the hills and jungles to the south of the Hailakandi valley, lying mostly between the Dhaleswari and Sonai rivers. After remaining quiet for more than five years, the Lushais under Sukpoilal suddenly invaded Tippera and Sylhet in December, 1868 The Cachar tea gardens were also attacked by the Lushais under Vonpilal. Military expeditions were sent against the villages of these chiefs. But although, on Vonpilal's death, his villages submitted, the expeditions failed to achieve their main objectives, namely to rescue the captives taken by the tribes and to punish them sufficiently for their outrages. The Government of Bengal proposed the despatch of a fresh expedition, but the Government of India turned down the proposal and, instead, sent Mr. J. W. Edgar, Deputy-Commissioner of Cachar, to the Lushai country to interview the principal chiefs and effect an amicable settlement. He saw the important chiefs, including Sukpoilal who was mainly responsible for the raids committed in December, 1868. and they agreed to maintain friendly relations with the British. But 'in the cold weather of 1870-71 several raids were made by the Kukis, or Lushais, on a more extensively orga-

nized scale, and of a far more determined character, than any of their previous incursions. The audacity of the raiders in many cases was quite new to the experience of the British Government, showing that they possessed fighting qualities not altogether to be despised, and that they had other tactics to depend on than those of night surprises and rapid flights, which had been supposed to be their only mode of aggression.'[15]

"Several raids occurred in quick succession late in January in the Hylakandi subdivision of Cachar. A tea garden was destroyed, the resident planter, Mr. Winchester, was killed and his little girl carried off. Several other tea gardens and coolie lines were attacked and more or less injured, though gallantly defended by the planters. Even the troops and police sent to the relief of the tea gardens were attacked. On the Sylhet frontier and in Hill Tippera, villages were similarly fired on, and some of them burnt; skirmishes ensued between the police guards and the raiders, with uncertain results."[16]

These raids proved the failure of the policy of conciliation. "The policy unanimously recommended by the local officers was that raids should be met by condign punishment, in the shape of a military occupation of the raiders' villages during as long a period as possible, the seizure of their crops and stored grain, and the forced submission of their chiefs; after that, by the steady endeavour of the frontier officers to influence them and promote trade; and finally, by a system of frontier posts, combined with a line of road running north and south from the Cachar frontier to that of Chittagong".[17]

Accordingly, a regular military expedition was sent in 1871-2. It was divided into two columns, one advancing southwards from Cachar, and the other marching northwards from Chittagong Hill Tracts. The various tribes, including the Howlongs and Syloos, submitted and agreed to surrender all captives, live amicably with British subjects and give free right of passage through their country.

The Government of India now again "adhered to the system of exercising political influence only without direct interference or control, coupled with the definition of a precise boundary line beyond which ordinary jurisdiction should on no account extend. The line was to be guarded by a chain of posts, and beyond it only political relations with the tribes were to be cultivated. Careful surveys were made of the frontier lines. A large portion of the Lushai country was brought within the familiar knowledge and political control of our officers, and most of the remainder was explored and mapped by parties who had friendly relations with the tribes. The Lieutenant-

Governor favoured the policy of maintaining an advanced post to bring political influence to bear upon the Syloos, Howlongs, and other tribes, whose country was more accessible from the Chittagong Hill Tracts than on the Cachar side. The Shindus in the direction of Arracan were more difficult to approach. The Lushai raids ceased entirely. Government passed a Regulation under the Statute 33 and 34 Vic. c. 3, with a view to bringing under more stringent control the commercial relations of our own subjects with the frontier tribes living on the borders of our jurisdiction".[18]

As occasional raids continued, the Government adopted in 1891 the policy of controlling the tribes from within. "A portion of the Lushai country was annexed, and a new frontier district, with an area estimated at 24,000 sq. miles was constituted from the 1st April 1891 under the name of the South Lushai Hills, under a Superintendent. The Chittagong Hill Tracts were converted from the 1st November 1891 into a subdivision in charge of an Assistant Commissioner under the direct supervision of the Commissioner of Chittagong. The troops were withdrawn, but a detachment of 200 Gurkhas was left at Fort Tregear about 45 miles distant from Lungleh. The exercise of control over the subjugated hill tribes from within, and the presence of troops at Fort Tregear produced a most salutary effect, so that perfect tranquillity prevailed in the Chittagong Hill Tracts".[19] The Chief. Jakopa, who had inflicted a serious reverse upon a British detachment, was defeated; he escaped but his village was destroyed, leading to the final subjugation of the Molienpui tribes. A *durbar* was held at Lungleh in January, 1892 It was attended by all the chiefs who swore friendship with one another. The boundary was settled between the north and south Lushai hills and the refractory Shindu Chief, Dokola, was captured and deported to Hazaribagh. Serious disturbances occurred in Howlong country in March-April, 1892. There was a sudden flare-up and the whole country rose in arms. The British force was "compelled to entrench in Vansanga's village," but the troubles were put down with the help of a column from Burma. The tribes, though cowed down, were not, however, crushed, and rumours were rife of their attacking Lungleh. A punitive expedition was accordingly sent in December, 1892, and the authority of the Government was re-established throughout the whole tract of country where it had been resisted. The South Lushai Hills was included in Bengal in September 1895, and later transferred to Assam from 1 April, 1898 [20]

It was necessary to send an expedition in 1895-6 against Kairuma and his dependent chiefs who had never been completely

brought under control. These chiefs in the South Lushai Hills submitted and agreed to pay tribute and furnish labour.[21]

V. THE HILL TRIBES ON THE EASTERN FRONTIER

The numerous tribes living in the hills and jungles within and outside the boundary of Chittagong District had always been a source of anxiety to the Government. These tribes, like the Shindus, Kumias, Kukis, etc., were little better than savages and their social and economic conditions made regular raids into the settled country almost a necessity. They had a severe shortage of women and domestic servants, and they had to acquire by force what nature denied to them. So the sheer instinct of self-preservation forced them to raid the villages on the border and carry away men and women to supply their everlasting wants. The nature of the country facilitated their marauding raids. The labyrinth of hills, intersected by precipices and watercourses, and covered with dense jungle, made any immediate pursuit an extremely difficult and hazardous task. As a further measure of safety, these tribes stockaded their villages and strewed the path with caltrops and other devices to hinder the progress of invading troops. The British Government at first tried to control these tribes through a powerful family called the Poangs, whom they helped with money, arms and ammunition. But this neither stopped the occasional raids nor enabled the Government to punish the raiders. Hence the Government adopted a different policy. The hill tracts were separated from the regularly administered area and placed under a Superintendent with Magisterial powers, who, it was hoped, by constant intercourse with the tribes would be in a better position to control their activities.

But the natural inpulses for ages, created by necessities of life, could not be easily checked and suppressed. In 1860 the Kukis, living between the Feni and the Karnafuli rivers, issued from the hills and having carried out devastation along the former river suddenly descended on the plains of Tippera. They killed nearly 300 persons and took two hundred captives. The raid caused a great panic and many villages in the neighbourhood were wholly deserted. As a punitive measure a force of 1,250 military police penetrated into the Kuki country and destroyed the village of the ringleader. The Kukis retaliated by another raid, but were repulsed with loss. As a further penal measure the recalcitrant tribes were excluded from the markets of the plains where they used to barter their hill cotton and coarse cloth for rice, salt, hardware, gun-powder and matchlocks. A chain of frontier posts was maintained by the Superin-

tendent, and the Poang Raja and the ruler of Independent Tippera were asked to do the same.[22]

The Garos, to whom reference has been made above, committed outrages in the Mymensingh district and were severely punished by two forces of military police in 1861.

Troubles were also caused by the Khasias in the Jaintia Hills. The Raja of this country had voluntarily handed over his domains to the British in 1835 in lieu of a pension of Rs. 500 a month. The Khasias resented the imposition of a house-tax in 1858, but after some resistance were forced to yield. The Khasias again rebelled in 1862, and two regiments of soldiers had to be sent to aid the local troops in suppressing the disorder. The causes of the rebellion are said to be the establishment of a Christian Mission and interference with some social practices.

A very serious riot took place at Phulguri in Nowgong (Assam) on 18 October, 1861, in which the Assistant Commissioner was killed by the mob[23]

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1. J. C White, *Sikkim and Bhutan*, p. 292
2. Lahiri, 216 ff.
3. Report of Ashley Eden.
3a. Buckland, I, 178-79, 303-12.
3b. Cf Vol VIII
3c. See pp. 570-71, 587-88
4. J. Roy, *History of Manipur*, p. 51
5. Cf Chapter V.
6. See pp 136-7
7. Political Despatch of the Court of Directors to the Government of India, No 14, dated 5th May, 1852 (quoted in a note by the Chief Commissioner of Assam on the annexation of Manipur), Foreign Department Proceedings, Secret—E, October, 1891, Nos. 123-147.
8. Roy, op cit., 80.
9. Ibid, 97
10. Ibid, 99-100
11. Foreign Department Proceedings, Secret-E, October, 1891, Nos. 123-147.
12. See p 730
13. Note by the Viceroy on the policy to be pursued with regard to the future of Manipur, dated 10th August, 1891, Foreign Department Proceedings, Secret—E, October, 1891, Nos. 123-147.
14. Ibid
15. Buckland, I. 457-60.
16. Ibid, 460
17. Ibid, 461-2.
18. Ibid, 504.
19. Ibid, II. 906.
20. Ibid, 907-08.
21. Ibid, 975
22. Ibid, I 179-82.
23. Ibid, 182-3.

CHAPTER XXXIII

FOREIGN POLICY

I. GENERAL NATURE

The phrase 'foreign policy', applied to India, must be understood with two limitations. In the first place, being a subordinate branch of the Home Government, the Government of India, strictly speaking, could not have any foreign policy of their own, and they had to co-ordinate their foreign relations with those of the British Empire, which really meant that they had merely to carry out the policy formulated by the British Cabinet. But as the interests of India loomed large in the eyes of the Cabinet in shaping their policy with respect to certain European powers, notably Russia, the Government of India had naturally a great voice in those matters which affected them, and exercised no mean influence upon the decision of the authorities at home. Further, on account of the great distance and consequent delay in communication, before the seventies, the initiative had to be taken in an emergency by the Government of India, and in all cases the Home Government could only formulate the policy in broad outline, leaving the execution of it in detail to the almost unfettered discretion of the Government of India. Thus foreign policy or relations with external powers formed a distinct branch of Indian administration, and its importance is indicated by the fact that this Department was always in direct charge of the Governor-General himself.

The second limitation to the meaning of 'foreign policy' arises out of the gradual evolution of British rule in India. Normally speaking, foreign policy would refer to the relations of the Government of India with any political authority, not owing allegiance to it, in or outside India. In this sense the foreign policy of the Government of India would include, at one time or another, its relationship with almost all the Indian powers which is usually regarded as a normal part of the internal history of India. The expression 'foreign policy' is therefore restricted to denote the attitude of India towards political authorities whose domains lay outside the geographical boundaries of India. Taken in this limited sense, the foreign policy of India, properly speaking, could possibly begin only after the consolidation of the British authority in India.

The two foregoing considerations make it clear why the foreign policy of Indian Government took a definite shape only in the nine-

teenth century, about the beginning of the period covered by this volume, and its principal objective from the beginning to end was the security of the natural frontiers of India, by territorial expansions or other means, on the north-west and the north-east. Other objects, particularly commercial advantages, which from time to time influenced the policy, may be regarded as only subordinate or subsidiary.

The keynote of the foreign policy in the north-west was supplied by the rapid advance of Russia towards the east and south. Her conquests in Central Asia brought her dangerously near the frontier of Afghanistan, and her strangle-hold on Persia supplied an alternative route to the heart of the same country. Although the two independent principalities of Sindh and the Punjab intervened between the British territory in India and Afghanistan, still the British regarded advancing Russian power as a serious menace to the security of India. This Russophobia dominated the foreign policy almost throughout the period under review. Direct negotiations with Russia to arrive at an understanding did not produce any immediate result. In order to counteract Russian designs, Great Britain tried to establish her influence in Persia and Afghanistan She failed in both, and the result was the disastrous Afghan War of 1839, described in Chapter VII

Britain was ultimately successful in her negotiations with both Persia and Russia, though the settlement arrived at was too late to prevent the Afghan War In 1844 the visit of Tsar Nicholas to England gave the British Government an opportunity of concluding a definite agreement with Russia. Russia agreed to keep the Khanates of Bokhara, Khiva and Samarkhand as neutral zones, and join with Britain in maintaining the internal peace This understanding was faithfully observed till the outbreak of Crimean War in 1854 again strained the relations between the two

Persia proved less tractable The Shah was forced to relinquish his design on Herat by the threat of the British, and raise the siege of that city in 1839 But as soon as he heard the news of British disaster in Afghanistan in 1840, he renewed his aggressive plans against Herat. Unfortunately for him, he did not get any encouragement, far less support, from Russia. McNeill threatened to resort to force and was backed by the Russian envoy, Count Medem. The Shah had no option but to yield. Finally, he composed all his differences with the British and even went so far as to "put on record the statement that nothing but benefit could result to Persia from British friendship, and nothing but evil from its loss".[1]

But in 1852, 1854, and 1856 Persia renewed her attempts on Herat, and was each time foiled by the passive or active resistance of the British. There were other causes of conflict also, which are beyond the purview of the present work. "The long smouldering feud between Great Britain and Persia broke out into open warfare" in 1856, an "alleged diplomatic discourtesy to the British crown" serving as the *casus belli*.[2] The despatch of Outram's expedition had the desired effect and the hostilities were brought to an end by the Treaty of Paris, 1857.

This had important effect upon the Anglo-Afghan relations Dost Muhammad, the ruler of Kabul, who was defeated, dethroned, exiled in India, and again restored, was naturally in a sullen mood. He gave evidence of his anti-British feelings by sending troops to the aid of the Sikhs in their fight against the English (1848). But the repeated invasions of Herat by Persia brought about conciliation between him and the Government of India. The British authorities wisely left him alone, and did not show any disposition to renew the attempt to dominate over Afghanistan by force. The Government of India therefore tried to secure the safety of the North-West frontier, by the expansion of its frontier up to the natural barrier offered by the impenetrable hills, with only a few passes. The result was the annexation of Sindh and the Punjab. The first was an unprovoked act of aggression, universally condemned as immoral and unjust. The second, though dictated by the same frontier policy, was covered by thinly veiled excuses of self-defence which however, deceived nobody. In both cases the Government of India took the initiative. The home authorities did not repudiate the action of the Government of India, even though they disapproved of the annexation of the Punjab and strongly condemned the annexation of Sindh The history of these two annexations has been given in details in Chapters VIII and X.

The conquest of the Punjab and Sindh brought the British authorities face to face with the sturdy hill tribes that peopled the no man's land between India and Afghanistan and owed allegiance to neither. This constituted a new problem of foreign policy throughout the period covered by this volume, and even beyond it, and has been discussed in Chapter XXXI.

II. RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN

The friendship with Afghanistan, definitely restored in A.D. 1855, and further strengthened in 1857, did not continue even for a quarter of a century. Once more Afghanistan fell a victim to the "Russophobia" of English statesmen. To make matters worse, the

relation with Afghanistan soon became a question of party politics, both in India and Britain. In view of the great part played by Russophobia in the foreign policy of the British Government in general and Afghan policy in particular, it is necessary to give a brief outline of Russian advance in this region.[3]

The same impulse of commercial and territorial gains which lay at the root of British imperialism in India, strengthened by the fear of being forestalled by the British and not an unnatural desire "to keep England in check by the threat of intervention in India",[4] induced the Russians to initiate a great forward movement. The Russian advance to the east and south was urged by the same consideration and favoured by similar circumstances by which the British established their political supremacy in India, and the Russian movement followed more or less the same stages till it reached the borders of Afghanistan. Establishment of trade posts, inevitably followed by expeditions against petty States which threatened their security, desire to save the warring tribes by bringing them under Russian supremacy, and, above all, the great humanitarian motive of introducing the benefits of civilization among peoples steeped in ignorance and superstition,— all these served as pretexts for Russian advance, as they did for every other colonizing power in Europe The most interesting and curious feature in the whole history of Russian advance in Central Asia is the howl of rage and discontent raised by the English who stigmatized it both on moral and political grounds. This can only be appreciated if we concede to the British people the right to a monopoly of the motives which inspired Russia as much as England, and of the tactics adopted by both. It is unnecessary, therefore, to trace, in detail, the circumstances which led the Russians from one stage to another, and it will suffice if the date and general line of their advance are indicated in outline.

In 1842 the Russian dominions did not extend beyond the Aral Sea. By the end of 1847 the Russians advanced to the lower reaches of the Jaxartes or Sir Darya. Within six years they advanced along this river about 280 miles from its mouth In 1854 they reached the valley of the Ili river which flows into Lake Balkash. The Crimean War (1854-6) for a time arrested the advance, but it was resumed after the war was over. In 1863 the frontier of Russian dominions ran along the Sir Darya, south-east to Chimkent, then running due east it passed below the lake of Issiq Kol to the formidable range of Tien Shan.

Then Russia made a sudden thrust into the territory between the Jaxartes and the Oxus—the Sir Darya and Amu Darya of modern times—famous in ancient and medieval history of the world. This

was regarded even by the Russians themselves as such a momentous step as to require a public explanation or justification. So Prince Gortchakoff issued his famous memorandum of 1864 holding out the Russian advance as the inevitable outcome of progress and civilization. The huge civilizing machine rolled forward at a high speed. With the establishment of the Russian supremacy in the three important States, namely, Tashkent in 1865, Samarkand in 1868, and Bokhara in 1869, the Russian bear firmly planted its feet on the banks of the Oxus (Amu Darya). Prince Gortchakoff had very rightly pointed out in his memorandum of 1864, that "Russia, in approaching Afghanistan, was influenced by the same imperious law that had led the armies of Great Britain across the plains of Hindustan and the Punjab till they reached the mountains."[4a]

British statesmen, both in England and in India, looked upon the Russian progress as a serious menace to the security of India. But there was a sharp difference of opinion between two schools of thought about the proper course of policy to be adopted. These two schools are generally described as "Forward" and 'Stationary'. The British Russophobia, which may be traced as far back as the thirties, was accelerated by the further advance of Russia towards the Afghan frontier, and formed the common basis of the foreign policy advocated by both. But they differed as to the means best calculated to effect the common purpose of checking the Russian invasion of India, which both took for granted as inevitable. The former advocated the old Palmerstonian policy of anticipating and forestalling Russian designs by establishing control over Afghanistan by friendly measures, if possible, and coercion, if necessary. They even went so far as to suggest the establishment of British posts in Kabul and Herat, if not further beyond it. The other school preferred to let the Russians advance through the hills and dales of Afghanistan and to maintain the line of the Sindhu river or the foothills beyond it as the defensive frontier of India. Past experience had convinced them of the danger and risk involved in any attempt to establish political domination in Afghanistan, and they held that even from military point of view the defensive strategy suggested by them was a sound one. For the enemy was sure to be exhausted by the very process of passing through the hills, and not unlikely would have to face the opposition of hostile warlike tribes inhabiting them. In any event, an enemy, thus exhausted and with inhospitable hills between it and its base, would be more vulnerable to a defensive army on the frontier of India having easy communication with its base of operations.

The British policy, as mentioned above,[5] was partially modified by Lawrence in 1867-69, and Mayo gave a definite shape to it by trying to win over the friendship and goodwill of the Amir of Afghanistan without committing any formal defensive alliance with him. The two met at Ambala where the Amir was overwhelmed with the lavish display of magnificence and hospitality by Mayo. Although there was no definite engagement, the Amir returned with better feelings towards the English. Mayo thereupon laid down the key of this new policy in the following words: "Surround India with strong, friendly and independent states, who will have more interest in keeping well with us than with any other power, and we are safe". "If we can only persuade people," said he, "that our policy really is non-intervention and peace, that England is at this moment the only non-aggressive power in Asia, we should stand on a pinnacle of power that we have never enjoyed before".[6]

As against the views of the Forward School, Mayo held that the best security for India consisted in maintaining the frontier States of Afghanistan, Baluchistan and the newly created State of Eastern Turkestan in a position of effective independence. He helped Baluchistan by demarcating the political boundary between Afghanistan and Persia, and by efforts to put an end to the internal dissensions and conflicts among the chiefs.[7] Mayo also maintained friendly relations, without any political entanglement, with Yakub Kushbegi who, in 1869, had made himself the ruler of the territory between Pamir and China, which had successfully rebelled against China in 1864.[8]

At Home, the Liberal Party generally sided with the 'Stationary', and the Conservatives, with the 'Forward School'. The view of the former, partially modified by Lawrence in 1867-69, therefore, dominated the foreign policy of India so long as Gladstone was at the head of the Liberal Ministry in Britain and the office of Viceroyalty was filled by Lawrence, Mayo, and Northbrook.

But while Lawrence was disinclined, first to interfere in the affairs of Afghanistan, and later to form a definite alliance with the Amir, he realized the need of coming to an understanding with Russia. He and his School were prepared to concede that though the Russian advance was a serious menace to India, it was "no less inevitable and natural than the corresponding advance of British authority on the other side of Afghanistan".[9] Lawrence therefore was eager to conclude an amicable settlement with Russia, 'fixing the limits within which the spheres of the two countries should extend, and the transgression of which by Russia should, in his view, involve her in "war with England" in every part of the world'.[10] The

Home Government took up the idea and began negotiations with the Russian Government, which readily welcomed the proposal of maintaining between the two empires in Asia "a zone to preserve them from contact". No formal agreement was concluded, but an assurance was given to England that the Tsar regarded Afghanistan as "completely outside the sphere within which Russia may be called upon to exercise her influence". The next step was to fix a definite boundary of Afghanistan, and a final agreement was reached in January, 1873, by which the Oxus was accepted as the northern boundary line of Afghanistan. Russia further gave positive assurance to the effect that she had no designs on Khiva, and orders had been issued against any advance in that direction. This evidently satisfied the Liberal Government under Gladstone and explains its refusal to embroil itself with Russia by any definite alliance with Afghanistan against that power, as proposed by Northbrook.

It may be reasonably presumed that Gladstone and his party felt, like Lawrence, that Russia had as much right to extend her power in Central Asia, by pursuing a policy of annexations and protectorates, as the British had already done or tried to do to the south of the Hindu Kush mountains. It was, at least, not for the British, to find fault with either Russia's imperial policy or flagrantly aggressive attitude towards native powers, as they had themselves pursued the same policy, and followed the same tactics in India. Gladstone was, therefore, more tolerant towards Russia and less sensitive to her advance in Central Asia.

But soon after the agreement with Russia, the Liberal Party was defeated in the General Election of 1874 Gladstone resigned, gave up the leadership of the party, and practically retired from political life. Disraeli succeeded him as Prime Minister and Lord Derby and Lord Salisbury became, respectively the Foreign Secretary and the Secretary for India. This combination gave a new orientation to England's attitude towards Russia and consequently upon the policy towards Afghanistan It was not merely a revival of the 'Forward Policy' but something more than that. In order to view it in its true perspective, it is necessary to have some idea of the virus of new imperialism which Disraeli injected into British politics, particularly as it had wide repercussion on the administration in India. It is admirably summed up in the following lines:

"For twenty years Disraeli, both as statesman and writer, had been educating his party to the recognition of Great Britain's wider imperial destiny Having now behind him a compliant House of Commons and a consistently sympathetic House of Lords, he lost no time in putting his ideas into practice. It was his ambition to revive

the spacious days of Elizabeth; Great Britain's influence should be felt to furthest Thule. Without her word nothing should be done in Europe, for he was determined to win for his country the place in Continental politics which Germany under Bismarck was usurping. Still more distinctly, he aspired to make his country, instead of Russia, the imperial mistress of the East".[11]

The change in the attitude of the Home Government towards the North-Western Frontier Policy in India was immediate and decisive. Sir Bartle Frere, Ex-Governor of Bombay, and now a member of the India Council, drew the attention of Salisbury to the exposition of 'Forward Policy' in Sir Henry Rawlinson's memorandum of 1868, of which a detailed account has been given in Chapter XXV.[11a] Salisbury accepted, *in toto*, the policy adumbrated therein, and addressed a despatch to the Viceroy on January 22, 1875, formulating the new policy. This document has been justly described as fateful because it led to the abandonment of the old prudent policy, and the opening of a new era of rash experiment and daring adventure.[12]

In this fateful despatch Salisbury observed that the information of the Government of India as to what happened in Afghanistan was neither adequate nor reliable, and directed the Viceroy to take steps to establish a political agency, first at Herat and then at Kandahar. Lord Northbrook immediately telegraphed the view of his Government that "the time and circumstances appeared unsuitable for taking the initiative in the matter". He explained later, in a private letter, dated September 30, 1875: "My firm opinion is that to do anything to force him (the Amir) to receive an agent of ours in his country against his will is likely to subject us to the risk of another unnecessary and costly war in Afghanistan before many years are over." These words proved prophetic. But in the meanwhile a regular duel was going on between the Government of India and Salisbury, the former steadily opposing the idea of stationing a British agent at Herat, and the latter as persistently urging the execution of the measure without delay.

But counsels of prudence had no effect upon the Government at Home, where the "forward" party was in full 'hue and cry' and a spirited foreign policy 'was the parole of the day'.[13] It had been successfully tried in Europe, and was to be continued in Asia. Disraeli was, of course, in full sympathy with it and he had already given evidence of his imperialist outlook by arranging the visit of the Prince of Wales to India in 1875, and proposing, early next year, the assumption of the title 'Empress of India' by Queen Victoria. Northbrook felt unable to keep in tune with this new policy and resigned.

Disraeli nominated Lord Lytton to succeed Lord Northbrook as Viceroy. The appointment was as much a surprise to him as to the public. For his gifts were literary, and though he was the British ambassador at Lisbon, he was never interested in high politics. Besides, as he himself said, he was ignorant of Indian affairs. But all this was probably regarded as qualification rather than disqualification. For, as has been aptly observed, "Lord Lytton was not required to have an Indian Policy;-one had been prepared for him in advance, and he was merely selected as the likeliest instrument for executing it."[14] Even the first Foreign Secretary of the new Viceroy could not help remarking that he had come to India "more as a Government official than as an oriental ruler."

Lord Lytton seems to have learnt his lesson in imperialism with the zeal of a neophyte and, in some respects, seems to have far surpassed both Salisbury and Disraeli. He had certain definite views fixed in his mind even before he reached India. These may be formulated in the shape of the following propositions.[15]

1. It was almost absolutely certain that all the intermediate States between Russia's Asiatic Empire and that of Britain, including Afghanistan, shall, before long, be absorbed by either Russia or Britain. The line of contact between the two conterminous powers must be a strong military line.

2. The range of the Hindu Kush and its spurs, with such outposts as may be necessary to secure the passes ought to be that boundary line.

3. Herat was the really crucial point and must not be in the hand of any other power, Russia or Persia.

4. To effect the purpose mentioned in 2 and 3 above there were only three possible courses open:

(i) To bind Amir Sher Ali to a definite engagement to exclude Russian influence permanently and effectually;

(ii) If the Amir cannot be tempted or coerced to do this, to break up the Afghan kingdom and to put up a new ruler in his place more amenable to British control.

(iii) To occupy by force a portion of Afghan territory as would, in case of failure of the above two, be absolutely requisite for the maintenance of the north-west frontier, presumably as defined above.

Lord Lytton categorically stated that the above also represented the views of Disraeli, though he did not feel sure whether they were merely his private opinion or represented the considered policy

of his Cabinet. There is no reason to doubt this, for Disraeli's letter to the Queen, dated 22nd July, 1877, quoted later, lends support to it.

But it may be safely presumed that Lord Salisbury did not endorse the views of Lord Lytton to the fullest extent. He did not accept Lytton's contention either that the Russian danger was imminent or that the Amir had definitely aligned himself with Russia against British interest. He definitely repudiated Lytton's proposal of disintegrating Afghanistan with a view to establishing a separate principality, with Herat as centre under British influence. He characterized as "crude excursions of an untutored fancy" Lytton's grandiloquent idea of making Hindu Kush the defence line of India, and for that purpose "to hold Kabul, Ghazni and Jelalabad as our principal bastion, with Quetta as a curtain, and advanced posts at Kandahar, Herat, Balkh etc.". This rebuff wounded the vanity of Lytton and he attributed it to the weakness and vacillation of the British Cabinet. He complained that if the Indian policy was thus dictated by the Secretary and no initiative or liberty of action was left to the Viceroy, Russia would continue to advance.

Salisbury found to his dismay, that in his great proconsul he had unchained a spirit which it was difficult to control. But he somehow managed the difficult task. Fortunately for Lytton, Salisbury became Foreign Secretary and Viscount Cranbrook came to the India Office. Lytton found in him a more pliable instrument for carrying out his designs. Political circumstances also favoured Lytton The Russian expedition against the Tekke Turcomans and the occupation, though temporary, of Kizil Arvat portended to many that not only Merv but possibly also Herat would pass under Russian authority.

Lytton's bellicose attitude towards Afghanistan was favoured by another stroke of good fortune. Events were now marching at railway speed in Europe which made a war between Britain and Russia not only inevitable but almost imminent. The revolt of certain Turkish provinces in the Balkan Peninsula in 1875 gave Russia an opportunity, as the champion of oppressed Christian people, to coerce Turkey into granting to her political rights and concessions which she ardently desired. On the other hand, Disraeli (who had become Earl of Beaconsfield in 1876), following in the footsteps of Palmerston, was determined 'to prevent Russia from using the crisis to realize her ambitions of old standing.'[16] Russia declared war against Turkey on 24 April, 1877. In spite of the heroic defence of Plevna for five months, Turkey was beaten on all fronts, and Russia came within the reach of Constantinople. In spite of the strong antipathy against Turkey displayed by a large section of the English

public, headed by Gladstone, Beaconsfield's Government left no doubt of its intention to actively oppose the Russian advance towards Constantinople. "Disraeli, still hotly pressed by the Queen, who even spoke of abdication, began to concert measures of warlike preparations."[17] The Government announced that it would "move a supplementary estimate, fixed at six millions, for military and naval supplies, the reason being the rapid advance of Russia towards the Turkish capital."[18] "On February 8, 1878, the English fleet was sent up to Constantinople, and on March 27, the Cabinet decided to call up the reserves and to seize a military post such as Cyprus or Alexandretta."[19] When Russia forced Turkey to accept the humiliating Treaty of San Stefano on March 3, 1878, the British Foreign Secretary issued a circular to all the European States demanding that Russia should submit it to a Congress, and Disraeli summoned Indian troops to Malta.[20]

These events had their repercussion on the Indo-Afghan relations. Russia, baulked of its prey, when it was almost within its grasp, by the open hostility of England, was unable to withhold a European concert and agreed to submit the whole question to a Congress at Berlin. But she was enraged beyond measure at the British machinations, and decided to strike England in Asia. There can be hardly any doubt that this was one of the objects which Russia had deliberately kept in view in her expansionist policy in Asia. England had always stood in the way of the realization of Russian imperial designs, but Russia had no means to strike England in Europe. She, therefore, looked upon a strong military position on the Oxus as a valuable weapon "to keep England in check by the threat of intervention in India".[21]

The practical result of this was seen in the despatch of a Russian mission to Kabul for a political *rapprochement*—real or apparent—between Russia and Afghanistan. Though it is clear that this Russian attempt to establish an alliance with Afghanistan was rather a tactical move than a deeply laid scheme for invasion of India, it was sufficient to serve as the *casus belli* in the eyes of Lord Lytton and his masters.[22] In view of the importance which has been attached to the so-called Russian intrigue at Kabul, as a justification of British policy, it is necessary to point out that Disraeli thought of adopting the same strategy towards Russia. Describing in a letter to the Queen (July 22nd, 1877) the measures which were to be taken if war broke out with Russia because of her apprehended occupation of Constantinople, the Prime Minister wrote: "It is Lord Beaconsfield's present opinion that in such a case Russia must be attacked from Asia, that troops should be sent to the Persian Gulf,

and that the Empress of India should order her armies to clear Central Asia of the Muscovites, and drive them into the Caspian. We have a good instrument for this purpose in Lord Lytton, and indeed he was placed there with that view."[23]

The nature of the diplomatic approach of Russia to Afghanistan and its repercussion on the British Government both in India and Britain have been described in Chapter XXV. But when Lord Lytton had precipitated the crisis, the attitude of the Home Government was entirely changed by the Treaty of Berlin (July 13, 1878) Beaconsfield claimed that he had brought peace with honour by an all-round settlement with Russia, both in Asia and Europe. He was therefore disposed to disapprove of Lytton's action which would spoil the good work he had done at Berlin.

His last minute efforts failed to check the ambitious designs he had himself planted in the heart of his great proconsul and sedulously encouraged. The latter, confining his attention to affairs nearer home, rather found that the Treaty of Berlin left the coast clear for the pursuit of his policy to disintegrate Afghanistan or coerce the Amir to abject submission. So he dragged the unwilling Cabinet along with him to his fatal policy as described in Chapter XXV, and the result was another unprovoked war in 1878.

The history of the first Afghan War was repeated. The initial success was followed by disaster, and the British had to quit Afghanistan and accept the new Amir, Abdur Rahman, who forced his way to the throne of Kabul just at this juncture. Gladstone again came into power and decided to forego all the gains of the war and restore the *status quo*. Though ultimately Quetta, Pishin and Sibi were retained by the British, they maintained the policy of strict non-interference in the affairs of Afghanistan and won over its ruler, the Amir, by subsidies, supply of arms and other friendly measures.

Amir Abdur Rahman remained faithful to his pledges, and the Government of India renewed in 1883 the guarantee of helping Afghanistan in case of any unprovoked aggression. This was dictated by the fear, on both sides, of Russia, whose steady advance towards the frontier of Afghanistan caused alarm to them. In spite of the agreement of 1873, referred to above, Russia was steadily establishing her authority in Southern Turkestan. She suffered a defeat in 1877-78 at Gok Teppa, and her progress was temporarily checked. But the Tekke Turcomans were finally subjugated in 1880-81.[24] British diplomacy tried to instigate Persia against Russia by inducing her to claim sovereignty over Merv. But in 1881 Persia concluded a treaty with Russia, fixing boundaries between their respective dominions. Though all the while Russia repeatedly assured Britain that she

had no intention of occupying Merv or any fresh territory, she occupied in 1884 not only that strategic city, but also Sarakhs, on the Perso-Afghan frontier. The Russian map showed the boundaries of Merv extending southwards as far as the Harirul river near Herat. It is generally believed that Russia was encouraged to renew the aggressive campaign, partly by the pacific disposition of Gladstone ministry and partly by Britain's pre-occupation with the serious situations in Sudan and Ireland. Gladstone began negotiations with Russia for precisely defining the northern boundary of Afghanistan. Russia agreed, but delayed matters considerably under one pretext or another, while a strong force was sent to forestall matters by occupying as much of the disputed area as possible. The position became acute in respect of the fertile tract round the town of Panjdeh which had been hitherto regarded as lying within Afghanistan. Even while the British representative on the Boundary Commission was near the boundary, waiting for his Russian colleague, the Russian force attacked Panjdeh on March 30, 1885, and occupied it, driving the Afghan forces with a loss of 500 lives. This created panic and alarm, and even Gladstone was forced to take a strong attitude. He called up the reserves and moved a vote of credit in the House of Commons for military preparations. Happily, better counsels prevailed on both sides and an agreement was reached by which Russia kept Panjdeh, but the Zulfikar Pass, which was claimed by her, was assigned to Afghanistan The Boundary Commission now commenced its work in right earnest and the final protocol delimiting the frontier between Russia and Afghanistan was signed in 1887-8 But in 1892 Russia sought to establish her dominion over the whole of the Pamirs and, after protracted discussions, an agreement was signed on March 11, 1895, by which the Afghan boundary between Lake Victoria and the Tagdumbash was settled. Russia secured the territory north of the Panjah, while the part of Darwaz. to the south of the Oxus, belonging to Bokhara, was assigned to Afghanistan.

At the time of the Panjdeh incident, the Amir Abdur Rahman was in India, being invited to a conference with the new Governor-General, Lord Dufferin, at Rawalpindi. As soon as the news of the Russian occupation of Panjdeh reached India, Dufferin promised assistance to the Amir in arms, ammunition, and possibly also money, in case of war between Russia and Afghanistan. On his part the Amir showed calm and moderation in the face of the grave crisis threatening his kingdom, and made public declaration of his good faith and attachment to the British. The Amir was fêted and feasted, and received in a special durbar, not as a protégé, but as

an ally, with all the honour due to an independent sovereign. The Amir was highly gratified and remained a faithful ally of the British.

The agreement between the Russian and British Governments on March 11, 1895, regarding the Afghan boundary in the Pamirs region, finally ended the bugbear or menace of Russian invasion of Afghanistan and India. Henceforth Russia turned her attention to expansion towards the Far East and was soon involved in a war with Japan. Whatever might have been its effect upon the British foreign policy, the Government of India remained unaffected.

The elimination of Russian menace and the establishment of friendly relation with the Amir of Afghanistan could be reasonably expected to have brought to an end the problem of the North-Western frontier. But that was not to be. British imperialism did not die with Disraeli, and the long spell of Conservative rule in Britain from 1886 to 1906, had its repercussion on Indian politics. The 'Forward Policy' in India was not buried with Cavagnari, and now reappeared in a new shape. Attention was now turned to the wild military tribes living to the west of that part of the Panjāb and Sindh which was under the direct control and administration of the Government of India. It was now desired to extend the British authority over these tribes. These tribes had been always troublesome to the rulers of the Panjāb whoever they might be, for, partly due to predatory habits, and partly by sheer necessity of a livelihood, these tribes often carried on raids into the more fertile and settled territories on the plains, and punitive expeditions had to be sent against them by the British Government from time to time. But now a definite plan was made to bring these peoples under British authority.

On the alleged ground of removing causes of friction with the Amir, the boundary line between the Afghan and British zones was precisely defined and demarcated by the Durand Commission [25] This brought within the British sphere of influence a large number of wild and warlike tribes who loved independence above everything else. They were attached to the Amir by common ties of race, language, and religion; but the Amir's pretence of suzerainty over them was more nominal than real. But the removal of even this pretence caused, in Amir's opinion, a loss of his power and prestige among his own kith and kin, and he did not like the idea of delimitation of the boundary. The reasons which induced him to accept it, and his alleged complicity in the tribal risings of 1897-98, have been discussed above.[26] The Government of India were fully convinced of his guilt and they received ample proof of "the universal feeling amongst the tribesmen that they could rely not only

upon the approval and moral support, but also upon the active intervention in their favour of the Amir of Afghanistan."[27] The Government of India accordingly addressed a strong remonstrance to the Amir. The latter denied responsibility for the risings, repudiated all connection with the rebel tribesmen, forbade his own people to join tribal gatherings, and refused shelter to fleeing tribesmen.[28]

The relations between the Amir and the Government of India, between 1890 and 1895, were often strained to the utmost, almost to the breaking point. The Amir was very anxious to open direct relation with the British Government in London, but was refused. Fortunately both sides showed a great deal of restraint and moderation, and an open rupture was averted. At least outwardly, Amir Abdur Rahman maintained friendly attitude towards the British till his death in 1901.

Habibullah, the son and successor of Abdur Rahman, declared on his accession that he would continue the policy of his father in his relations to the Government of India. But his attitude was considered to be "the reverse of friendly". It is alleged that "he not only received tribal deputations from British territory, but also commenced intriguing with certain frontier fanatics and freebooters".[29] He also declined an invitation of the Viceroy to visit Calcutta. The Government of India felt somewhat perturbed at the haughty attitude of Amir Habibullah, and the influence exercised upon him by his brother Nasrullah, who was believed to entertain definitely anti-British sentiments. The Amir was even suspected of seeking Russian help.[30] So a mission was sent to Kabul in 1904, under Mr. (afterwards Sir) Louis Dane. Although the reception accorded to the mission was not very cordial, a treaty was concluded in March, 1905, which renewed the agreement of 1893.[31]

But whatever might have been the real attitude of Amir Habibullah, he maintained friendly relations with the Government of India. In 1906-7 he visited India, and in his farewell speech observed that "at no time will Afghanistan pass from the friendship of India".[32] He was true to these words even in the critical days of the First World War.

III. PERSIAN GULF

The East India Company opened a factory at Bushire in 1763. Early in the nineteenth century the British realized the importance of Persian Gulf and the territories adjacent to it, from both political and commercial point of view. Sir John Malcolm was sent as an envoy to Persia in 1808 and the political relations between Persia and Britain since then have been described above.[33] The part play-

ed by the British supremacy in the Persian Gulf in the bigger game of imperial rivalry between Russia and Britain has also been noted above.[34] The history of this supremacy goes back to the year 1820 A.D. At the beginning of the nineteenth century peace in the Persian Gulf was disturbed by piracy and interminable strife between the Chiefs who ruled over the petty States on its coast. The British Government stepped in, "in the interests of its own subjects and traders, and of its legitimate influence in the seas that wash the Indian coasts." After a severe, but short, struggle in 1820, the Chiefs were forced to submit and conclude agreement with the British. A maritime truce was concluded in 1839 and renewed from time to time till 1853, when a Treaty of Perpetual Peace was concluded. It provided that no Chief should fight against another by sea, but in case of aggressive attack by another, should refer the matter to the British Resident in the Persian Gulf. The British Government should maintain the peace of the Gulf and ensure the due observance of the treaty. In spite of occasional disturbance this treaty served its purpose fairly well.[35]

The status, thus gained by the British, of the self-constituted guardian of inter-tribal peace in the Persian Gulf, shortly paved the way, by gradual stages of poiltical ties, for the British suzerainty over all the Chiefs. The Chiefs, one and all, acknowledged the Government of India as their overlords and protectors; they bound themselves "not to enter into any agreement or correspondence with any other power, not to admit the agent of any other Government, and not to part with any portion of their territories." Thus was written "the most unselfish page in history," which, Lord Curzon declared, "we shall not wipe out". He had the hardihood to address in this strain the Chiefs of the Arab coast, assembled at a *Durbar* on *S S Argonaut* at Shargah, in November, 1903. But the climax was reached when he told them: "We saved you from extinction at the hands of your neighbours. We have not seized or held your territory. We have not destroyed your independence, but have preserved it." Obviously the word 'independence' has one meaning to the west of Suez and another to the east of it. Curzon continued like a true imperialist:

"The peace of these waters must still be maintained; your independence will continue to be upheld; and the influence of the British Government must remain supreme." He wound up his address by reminding the Chiefs that the British Government would not "approve of one independent Chief attacking another Chief by land, simply because he was not permitted to do it by sea, and thus evading the spirit of his Treaty obligations."[36]

IV. NORTH-EAST FRONTIER

The frontier policy in the north-east was dictated less by the problem of security, as in the north-west, and more by a spirit of aggrandisement and desire for territorial expansion, with the commercial advantage which was sure to follow from it. The territory of Burma, fertile and rich in natural resources, was an object of cupidity to British merchants. The way for its conquest was facilitated by the haughty pretensions of its ruler, a medieval oriental despot, unacquainted with the world outside his dominions. Advantage was taken of some petty incidents in Bengal border which could be easily settled, if necessary by local military operations, and a full fledged military expedition was launched against the heart of Burma in A.D. 1824. The result was a foregone conclusion. Burma possessed only two great generals, Winter and Cholera, who inflicted heavy casualties upon the British. Otherwise, save with a few erratic feats of Maha Bandula, the commander of the Burmese force, it was almost a plain sailing. The first Burmese War (1824-26) made the British supreme over the whole of the north-eastern frontier of India and gave them a footing on the Burma soil proper. But the cry of '*Delenda est Carthago*', perpetually raised by the British imperialist and mercantile interests, led to two more wars in 1852 and 1885, and the whole of Burma formed a part of the growing British empire. The three Burmese Wars have been described in detail in Chapters V and XXVI. Whatever one might think of the immediate causes of these wars, and whatever justification might be pleaded on behalf of the British the root cause of these wars is very frankly stated and admirably summed up by a British writer in the following lines:

"But it is within the realm of British policy that the causes of the War are to be found. It will be seen that the principle involved was identical with that in the China War of 1857—the unwillingness of oriental monarchs to recognise the Western claim of the right of protection over their natural subjects, and the like unwillingness of the merchants to submit to the laws of the country in which he was domiciled—for the political theory of sovereignty in the East is territorial Further, there was his inability or unwillingness to accept the low status in native society in which his calling, as an alien merchant, placed him"[1]

Confirmation and illustration of this meet us at every step as we proceed with the detailed narrative of the Burmese wars. There was, however, an additional element involved in the Third Burmese War and the final extinction of Burma as an independent kingdom. This was the danger of peaceful penetration of France in Indo-China and the consequent alarm and nervousness to Britain, which differed in degree, but not in nature, from her reaction to the military aggrandisement of Russia in Central Asia. The position of

Burma offered a close parallel to that of Afghanistan, and the Forward Policy was equally operative in both cases. Fortunately for the British, the Burmese were of less stern stuff than the sturdy Afghans, the natural obstacles to military advance were less formidable, and the striking power of the French, far from their base in Europe, was much less to be dreaded than that of the Russians. This explains the difference in the fate of Afghanistan and Burma. Afghanistan was left as an independent power. But after a nominal war which lasted less than a week, and in which the Burmese troops "scarcely fired a shot," a laconic proclamation of fifty words issued by Lord Dufferin, the Viceroy of India, on January 1, 1886, informed the world that Burma had ceased to exist as an independent kingdom and formed a part of the British dominions in India.[38]

It would be a tedious task to refer at length to the controversy over the French designs on Burma. According to the British version the French policy was dictated by a deliberate attempt to bring Burma under French protection, and the Burmese gladly responded to the proposal. Isolated incidents and casual utterances by individuals have been brought forward as evidence of this, but the detailed discussion in Chapter XXVI would indicate that there is no valid ground in support of the British contention. The utmost that can be said is that the French, animated by the same colonial and imperial instinct as guided the British policy in the same region, looked forward to the establishment of their authority in Indo-China, and Burma was not excluded from their purview But this is very different from the actual pursuit of a definite and secret design of establishing a political control, far less protectorate, over Burma, to which she was a willing partner. There is, however, little doubt that it was the fear of political and commercial rivalry of the French that led Britain to annex Upper Burma, and this course was decided upon before ostensible pretexts were put forward to justify the declaration of war. In this connection, a communication from the Secretary of State for India to the Prime Minister, dated 28 August, 1885, throws interesting light on the British point of view. Lord Randolph Churchill begged Lord Salisbury to warn the French Government that the undue pushing of French commercial ambitions in Burma would "necessitate such prompt and decided measures as may most effectually satisfy the paramount rights of India in the Indo-Chinese Peninsula".[39] These words indicate not only that the annexation of Upper Burma was already thought of, but also that the British now openly claimed a paramount right over the whole of the Indo-Chinese Peninsula. It was a worthy counterpart of the ambitious design of establishing British supremacy in Central Asia.

far beyond the Hindu Kush mountains, which prompted the policy of Disraeli and Lord Lytton.

This conception of paramount right and interest was necessarily developed further after the conquest of Burma. Siam (now called Thailand) separated Burma from the French possessions in Indo-China, which included Cochin-China, Annam, Cambodia and Tonkin. So the preservation of Siam "as a strong independent State had become of paramount importance for the Indian Empire," particularly, it may be added, as the trade of Siam, 'was for the most part in British hands'.[40] The frontier between Siam and Burma was demarcated. When France made an unprovoked war of aggression on Siam, the British interference saved Siam from utter extinction, though she had to concede important rights to France and to give up all the territories lying on the left bank of the Mekong river. After this war the negotiations were directly carried on between France and Britain about their respective spheres of influence in Indo-China, without, of course, any reference to the States concerned. France proposed to make the Mekong river as demarcating the two spheres of influence, but the British did not like to make the British-Indian and French-Indo-Chinese empires conterminous, and preferred to keep a buffer zone between the two. But ultimately, in 1895, Britain conceded the French demand and the Declaration of January 15, 1896, "fixed the Mekong as the boundary between the British and French possessions from the mouth of the Nam Huck northwards so far as the Chinese frontier".[41]

As could be easily anticipated, Siam was practically partitioned between France and Britain. The most valuable part of the country formed the respective spheres of influence of the two great European powers. Salisbury, of course, assured Siam that this arbitrary usurpation need 'not be regarded as throwing doubt upon the title and rights of the Siamese rulers to the remainder of their kingdom,' which, it may be mentioned by the way, was not of any value to either of the two powers. "The only justification advanced on behalf of Great Britain for this invasion of the rights of a small nation was contained in the plea that the territory in question affected 'our interest as a commercial nation', and that it might one day be the site of lines of communication which would be of great importance to neighbouring portions of the British Empire".[42]

V. TIBET

1. *Strategic importance*

The strategic importance of Tibet is very great, for it is an ideal buffer to India on the north. With the Lhasa Government controlling

the extensive desolate area of the northern plains and governing central and southern Tibet, and the Himalayan border States subordinate to, or in close alliance with, the Government of India, Tibet "forms the best possible barrier to India on the north".[43] This strategic aspect of Tibet has been well emphasized by Lovat Fraser: "No one who has gazed upon the mighty peaks of the Himalayas beyond Darjeeling can fail to feel instinctively that they are the natural northern boundary of India. On moonlit nights their majesty is beyond expression. High in the sky above the blue haze, they seem like the tents of the gods. They set a barrier to man's dominion which no ruler of India has ever sought to disregard. Yet they have been no obstacle to human intercourse, for through the narrow passes pilgrims and traders have passed to and fro between Tibet and India from time immemorial".[44] In view of what has been said above, about the British imperial policy, it would have been strange indeed if the British did not try to exercise some sort of political control over Tibet, not only to ensure a scientific frontier in the north, but also to exploit the economic resources of Tibet. The wool of Tibet was in great demand in India, while Indian tea could be profitably exported to Tibet. "The saucer-like depressions amid the high places of Western Tibet, produced by glacial action in the days when the mountains towered for eight miles towards the skies, probably contain the richest deposits of placer gold in the world. A pannikin of soil washed anywhere in these cups reveals visible traces of flake gold. Riches beside which the wealth of Klondike would seem meagre lie in the heart of a vast inhospitable emptiness, rarely traversed by man".[45] These two factors—military and economic—influenced the policy of the Government of India towards Tibet.

2. *Chinese supremacy*

In its attempt to increase its trade with Tibet and to safeguard its northern frontier against aggression, the Government of India had to reckon with China who claimed suzerainty over Tibet. There are three important landmarks in the progress of Chinese ascendancy over Tibet:—

(a) In 1718 the Chinese emperor sent an army which entered Lhasa to enthrone the Dalai Lama of his own choice. A garrison of 2,000 at Lhasa and military outposts on the road leading from Lhasa to China enabled China to assert her supremacy over Tibet.

(b) In 1750 the Ambans (Chinese Residents) murdered the Tibetan Regent, while the people of Tibet massacred the Chinese at Lhasa. The Chinese emperor sent a large army which restored Chinese supremacy and increased the power of the Ambans. Thus, in

the middle of the eighteenth century Tibet virtually passed under the control of China.

(c) Chinese ascendancy was still further strengthened in 1791-1792 when war broke out between Nepal and Tibet, leading to the intervention of China. A Chinese army supported the Tibetans in driving back the Gurkhas from Tibet and advancing within a few miles of the capital of Nepal. After rescuing Tibet from the Gurkhas the Chinese emperor tightened his control over Tibet. The Tibetan officials had to submit all important matters to the Ambans. Even the Dalai and Tashi Lamas had to prefer their requests to the Ambans; they could not communicate direct with the Chinese emperor. The Ambans aided in the selection of the Dalai, the Tashi and other high incarnate Lamas.[46] Thus, towards the end of the eighteenth century China exercised a considerable measure of control over Tibet. But China soon lost all effective authority over Tibet, which even dealt with foreigners independently as an autonomous State without any reference to China.

3. *Early relations between India and Tibet*

The East India Company was quite alive to the importance of improving trade relations with Tibet. In 1774 Warren Hastings, (Governor-General of India) sent George Bogle on a mission to Tibet to improve trade relations. Bogle established good relations with Tashi Lama, but failed to secure trade concessions due to obstructionism of Chinese officials. Bogle frankly confessed: "This is a stumbling-block which crosses me in all my paths".

In 1783 Warren Hastings sent Captain Samuel Turner on a mission to Tibet He spent a year in Tibet. He, too, failed to secure trade concessions. Nevertheless, as long as Warren Hastings remained in India, trade between India and Tibet flourished.

Shortly afterwards, however, an event happened which ended this happy era of good relations with Tibet. In the war which broke out between Tibet and Nepal in 1792, the Tibetans and Chinese got an impression that the British had encouraged the Gurkhas in their aggressive designs. Henceforth the Tibetans adopted the policy of exclusion—all communication between India and Tibet was stopped and "the approach of strangers, even of Bengal and Hindustan, was utterly prohibited".[47] "The door, which Warren Hastings had succeeded in opening a little, was closed more firmly then ever".[48]

But Tibet was not allowed to lead a secluded life. The Sikh power established by Ranjit Singh cast covetous eyes upon her. Immediately after the death of that ruler, the Sikhs conquered Iskardo from its ruler Ahmad Shah and made an attempt to con-

quer Lhasa. In 1841 Zorawar Singh, the *Vazir* of Raja Gulab Singh of Jammu and conqueror of Iskardo, proceeded with an army towards Tibet which lay next to Iskardo. After conquering several forts he seized Garo, the head-quarters of the Chinese Governor, and after defeating a Tibetan army got possession of Tuklakote, thereby extending the territories of the Lahore Durbar as far as the Marghil Pass up to the source of the river Sindhu. The British did not like this extension of the Sikh power and asked the Lahore Durbar to abandon the newly acquired possessions in Tibet and withdraw to Ladakh by 10 December, 1841. But before Zorawar Singh could retrace his steps he was surrounded by 10,000 Tibetan and 2,000 Chinese soldiers. Zorawar Singh had about 2,500 soldiers, but he died fighting on 12 December, 1841. The rulers of Iskardo and Ladakh now joined the Chinese against the Sikhs. By the end of May, 1842, the Sikh reinforcements reached Leh and imprisoned the ruler of Ladakh and wanted to attack Garo, but were prevented by the British who referred to an agreement with Maharaja Sher Singh of Lahore concluded in October, 1841, to the effect that the Sikhs should not extend their authority beyond Ladakh. It seemed that there was nothing to check the Sikh forces from their onward march over to Lhasa, but in view of the attitude adopted by the British, the Lahore Durbar thought it advisable to conclude peace with the rulers of Lhasa. Accordingly a treaty was concluded on 17 October, 1842. It established alliance between the Chiefs of Jammu and Tibet, accepted the old boundary between Ladakh and Tibet, and stipulated that the contracting parties should confine themselves within their respective boundaries. It was further provided that in conformity with ancient usage, tea and *pasham* and *shawl* wool shall be transmitted to India through the Ladakh road. This provision hit hard the commercial interests of the British and was changed after the British had occupied the Panjāb in 1846.[48a]

In 1855 the Gurkhas of Nepal invaded Tibet and secured important concessions,—the right to establish an agency at Lhasa, an annual payment of ten thousand Rupees by way of indemnity, free trade and extra-territorial rights. The Gurkha Government, on the other hand, agreed to assist Tibet, if invaded by foreign foes.

In 1885 Colman Macaulay, a Secretary of the Government of Bengal, obtained Chinese assent to conduct a mission to Lhasa. But the Tibetan Government would have none of it, as they were opposed to closer intercourse with India. The persistence of foreigners in exploring their country, so long secluded, had made them suspicious The secret explorations of Saratchandra Das, a Bengali, carried out under the auspices of the Government of India, in particular his

clandestine entry and surreptitious inquries filled the Tibetans with distrust of the British power in India.[48b] Indeed, the Tibetans looked upon the proposal of a British Mission to Lhasa as "the climax of a series of provocations, including the sending of secret agents to explore their country, and the building of a road through Sikkim about 1877 up to the Jelap Pass which led eastwards to the Tibetan valley of Chumbi—a pass which could be referred to by an Englishman as a vital link in 'the future highroad between India and China *via* Tibet".[48c]

As the Tibetans were opposed to the proposal, it fell through.[48d] This shows that though the Chinese advanced a vague claim of suzerainty over Tibet, and the Government of India found it convenient to maintain this fiction in view of the Tibetan policy of refusing to open any communication with them, Tibet was, in reality, no longer amenable to the control of China. It has also been urged that Tibetans' "desire to promote a policy of exclusion and to maintain their own monopoly of trade with India was connived at by the Chinese Resident".[49] In any event, the successful opposition to the Mission of Macaulay increased the arrogance of the Tibetans. In 1886 they sent a small body of militia to occupy Lingtu, which is about twelve or thirteen miles within Sikkim frontier. How the British drove them out will be narrated later.[50] No treaty was concluded with Tibet, but negotiations between Britain and China followed, and a convention between the two powers was signed by the Governor-General of India on 17 March, 1890. It recognized British Protectorate over Sikkim and laid down that the water parting of the Tista should be the boundary between Sikkim and Tibet. But China and Britain counted without the host. The Tibetan officers refused to countenance the delimitation of the Sikkim-Tibet frontier, and when boundary pillars were erected, they were mutilated or destroyed.[51] In accordance with the convention of 1890 a trade treaty was concluded between China and Britain in 1893, by which a trade mart was established at Yatung, eight miles on the Tibetan side of the frontier. "This place was unsuitable for a mart, but, though every attempt was made by the Chinese Amban to induce the Tibetans to substitute Phari for Yatung, it was found impossible to overcome their reluctance".[52] But this was not all. The Tibetans nullified the object of opening the trade mart at Yatung by building a wall to prevent British traders and travellers from going any further into Tibetan territory.[53] Attempts to develop Yatung were thus frustrated by Tibetan obstructiveness.

Bell has drawn two very important, but obvious, conclusions from the events recorded above. In the first place, it was apparent

to him that the Chinese control over Tibet was purely nominal, and the powerlessness of the Chinese suzerainty and the consequent futility to deal with the Amban in Tibetan matters were now recognized by all the British authorities.[54] Secondly, Bell found out that the Tibetan Government desired at all costs to keep the British at arm's length, for they feared and distrusted them. What Bell failed to realize was the wisdom and soundness of the Tibetan policy of keeping out the British from their country as the only means of avoiding the fate of so many States in India.[65]

4. *The Tibetan Expedition of Lord Curzon*

With the appointment of Lord Curzon as the Viceroy of India, the Indo-Tibetan relations entered into a new phase. Even the Himalayas could not operate as a barrier or limit to his imperial vision. The 'obdurate' (?) refusal of the Tibetans to accept a treaty, *to which they were not a party*, served as a good excuse for active intervention in Tibetan affairs.

But Lord Curzon took a realistic view of the political status of Tibet. It was evident to him that the Chinese suzerainty over Tibet was more nominal than real. "The Emperor's suzerainty over Tibet had almost ceased to exist. The Chinese Residents in Lhasa had long lost effective control".[56] Consequently Lord Curzon decided to communicate direct with the Tibetans. In 1899 the British Government agreed to Lord Curzon's proposal for direct communication with Tibet. The Viceroy sent a letter to Dalai Lama who returned it unopened. This rebuff, though it wounded the *amour propre* of the imperialist proconsul, did not appear to be a sufficient excuse for war. So the old stories of Russian influence and intrigue in Tibet came in as a handy excuse, though it was even more flimsy than in the case of Afghanistan. One Dorjieff, a Mongolian Buriat by birth, but a Russian subject, was believed to have some influence upon the Dalai Lama, the High Priest and ruler of Tibet. Dorjieff visited Russia in 1898, 1900 and 1901 to collect money from the Buddhists in Russia, but as he was received in audience by the Emperor, it was supposed that Dorjieff had a political mission. The Russian Foreign Minister, however, categorically denied that Dorjieff had any political mission. Next, stories were spread that China had ceded to Russia her suzerain rights over Tibet, that a treaty was already drafted to this effect, and that Russian arms had been imported into Lhasa[57] But corroboration of none of these has yet been found. A great English statesman had once advised those who were alarmed for India at the rapid advance of Russia that they should use large-scale maps. In the case of Tibet, even a small-scale map

would show the ridiculous nature of the fear, if any, of Russian advance to India through Tibet.

The fact seems to be that there was no genuine fear of Russia, and Russophobia was merely an excuse for intervention in Tibet. In 1902 Lord Curzon proposed to take active steps to coerce Tibet. But his ardour was checked by the Home authorities. For, the Government of Russia, which now controlled the Pamirs, had declared that a military expedition against Tibet would force it to take proper measures to safeguard its own interest in that region. But Lord Curzon urged upon the Home Government a vigorous policy to counteract Russian influence in Tibet. He told the Home Government that it was "the most extraordinary anachronism of the 20th century that there should exist within less than 300 miles of the borders of British India a state and a government with whom political relations do not so much as exist, and with whom it is impossible even to exchange a written communication".[58] He declared that the Chinese suzerainty over Tibet was "a constitutional fiction—a political affectation which has only been maintained because of its convenience to both parties"[59]

Lord Curzon ultimately persuaded the Home Government to send a mission under Colonel Younghusband, with a small military escort, to Khambajong, to the north of the Sikkim frontier, in order to "oblige the Tibetans to come to an agreement." The mission waited at Khambajong from July to December, 1903, in the hope of meeting the accredited Tibetan envoys, but none came. The mission was thereupon authorized to proceed further, occupy the Chumbi valley, and advance as far as Gyantse. The Tibetans opposed the advance of the British, but they had no modern military arms or training, and in their first encounter at Guru on 31 March, 1904, suffered a casualty of 600 in killed and wounded. The mission, which had been joined by fresh troops and thus became a military expedition, reached Gyantse and occupied it on 12 April, 1904. But as the Tibetans were still hostile, and in no mood to negotiate, the British force advanced as far as Lhasa, which they occupied on 3 August, 1904, practically without any opposition. The Dalai Lama fled with his entourage to Mongolia, and the Tibetans were forced to sign a treaty on 7 September, 1904. Its main provisions were:

- (i) Two new trade marts were opened—at Gyantse and Gartok.
- (ii) The Tibetans abolished all dues on trade to and from India.
- (iii) An indemnity of half a million pounds was to be paid by the Tibetan Government in 75 instalments.
- (iv) The Chumbi valley was to remain in British occupation until the payment was completed.

(v) No Foreign Power was to be allowed to intervene in Tibetan affairs or to send Agents to Tibet. Without British consent, no Tibetan territory was to be ceded, leased, etc., to any Foreign Power. No concession for roads, mines, etc. were to be given to any Foreign Power. No Tibetan revenues were to be pledged to a Foreign Power or to any of its subjects.

(vi) The Tibetans agreed to respect the frontiers of Sikkim violated by them[60].

The Russian Government held the view that the establishment of British supremacy at Lhasa would force it to change its Central Asian policy. The British Government was at that time very anxious to come to an understanding with Russia on Central Asian questions. The British Foreign Secretary, therefore, gave an assurance to the Russian Government on June 2, 1904, that so long as no other European power intervened, "Great Britain would neither annex Tibet, nor establish a protectorate over it, nor attempt to control its internal affairs."

According to the terms of the treaty with Tibet, the British would retain possession of the Chumbi valley until the indemnity of £ 500,000 were paid off in 75 instalments of one lakh of Rupees each. This proviso virtually meant a permanent control over Tibet. So the Home Government, to honour the pledge given to Russia, were opposed to a heavy indemnity and the occupation of Chumbi valley for a long period. Colonel Younghusband justified the convention because he held that the Chumbi valley "is the key to Tibet. It is a tongue of land thrust into India, on the Indian side of the divide". He declared it to be "the only strategical point of value on the northern frontier between Burma and Kashmir".[61] The Home Government, however, reduced the indemnity to twenty-five lakhs of Rupees. The evacuation of the Chumbi valley was rendered possible after three years, provided the Tibetans paid the indemnity and observed the convention. Not only did the British Government modify the treaty negotiated by Colonel Younghusband in these two important respects, but they also vetoed the Indian Government's proposal for an Agent at Lhasa. They also vetoed Colonel Younghusband's Agreement with the Tibetans by which the new British Agent at Gyantse might visit Lhasa to settle commercial matters which could not be settled at Gyantse. Thus, practically the British Government's policy of modifying the Lhasa convention and vetoing Government of India's proposal for an Agent at Lhasa undid Lord Curzon's work in Tibet.

In a speech in London, on July 20, 1904, Lord Curzon defended his military expedition against Tibet in the following words:

"We felt that we could not afford any longer, with due regard to our interests and prestige on that section of the frontier, to acquiesce in a policy of unprovoked insults, endured with almost unexampled patience, at the hands of the Tibetan Government ever since they, and not we—please remember this, ever since they, and not we—assumed the aggressive, and first invaded British territory eighteen years ago. And still less could we acquiesce in this treatment at the very time when the young and perverse ruler of Tibet, who it seems to me has shown himself to be the evil genius of his people, while refusing to hold any communication with us, or even to receive letter from the representative of the British Sovereign, was conducting communications with another great Power, situated not at his doors, but at a great distance away, and was courting its protection."[62]

Thus the *casus belli* was Tibetan aggression against British India, which obviously refers to the Tibetan invasion of Sikkim in 1885-6. As the Tibetan aggression was admitted to have occurred eighteen years before, the invasion of Tibet by Lord Curzon on that score admirably illustrates the fable of the wolf and the lamb. The reference to Dalai Lama was a gratuitous insult—a string of allegations unsupported by any reliable testimony. The net result of this unnecessary and costly expedition was practically nil. Thus the foreign military expedition which was last in point of time produced the least result. The most unfortunate result of this policy was that it helped to revive Chinese suzerainty in Tibet. To quote Lovat Fraser:

"China is the one Power which has reaped solid advantages from the Tibet Mission. The Peking authorities were astute enough to perceive at once that the march on Lhasa would bring about the rehabilitation of their suzerainty, and they remained quiescent while British troops were in Tibet. They have now reaped their reward, for the Dalai Lama, after a brief return to his capital, is a fugitive in India, and Chinese suzerainty is being developed into practical sovereignty. Having agreed to recognise the validity of Chinese claims, we have no alternative but to leave the unfortunate Tibetans to their not too tender mercies. We have not extended our trade as we had hoped, and we have raised up for ourselves a new and disturbing situation on the north-eastern frontier of India".[63]

VI. SIKKIM

The dynasty of the present Maharaja of Sikkim established its rule there in 1641, and the only important event after that seems to be a Nepalese invasion in 1791. Two years later, during the Sino-Napalese war, the Nepalese firmly established themselves in the Sikkim territory, lying to the south and west of the river Tistā.

British relations with Sikkim began at the outbreak of the war

with Nepal in 1814, after the conclusion of which the Government of India, by a treaty concluded in 1817, restored to the Raja of Sikkim the territory that had been wrested from him by the Nepalese. Some time about 1825 a boundary dispute arose between Nepal and Sikkim, in connection with which two British officers were despatched to the Sikkim frontier. These officers recommended to their Government the acquisition of Darjeeling. This was effected about a decade later in February, 1835, when the Raja of Sikkim was induced to cede unconditionally the Darjeeling tract under a Deed of Grant.

In 1841, the Government of India granted an allowance of Rs. 3,000 to the Raja as compensation for the cession of Darjeeling, and in 1846 increased this sum to Rs. 6,000 a year.

Dr. Archibald Campbell was appointed the first Superintendent of Darjeeling, and was also designated as "in-charge of political relations with Sikkim." From the beginning trouble arose between the Raja of Sikkim and the Superintendent on the question of slaves Dr. Campbell complained that the Raja was kidnapping people from Darjeeling and enslaving them, while the Raja's complaints were that his slaves were running away to Darjeeling and were not being restored to him.[64]

In 1849 Dr. Hooker and Dr. Campbell went to Sikkim for a friendly tour. Dr. Hooker was an eminent Botanist and was sent to India by the British Government to investigate the vegetable products of certain portions of India, particularly the mountainous region of the Himalayas. Both of them were arrested and imprisoned by the Sikkim authorities. It appears from the available documents that the immediate cause of their arrest was their intrusion into Tibet, and the actual circumstances leading to it may be briefly described as follows:

Hooker and Campbell, after a day's march, passed a 14,000 ft. ridge and crossed into the Tibetan frontier. Hooker stopped for taking some observations, and Campbell proceeded. Some time later, when Hooker started to overtake his companion, he was surrounded by Sikkim soldiers, one of whom actually seized him. Hooker threw him off, and pointing to some Chinese soldiers said that he was in Chinese territory and not in Sikkim, when the soldiers desisted. Hooker then proceeded and found Campbell sitting near ninety Chinese soldiers under an officer; the officer told them that they could camp there but proceed no further; but as their camp equipments had still not arrived they had to retreat without further delay. When Hooker and Campbell began their retreat, the conduct of some Sikkim soldiers became unbearable and Campbell turned sharp

on them. He "said he was in Cheen, and under the Cheen officer, and ordered them off; they grew violent and Campbell was obliged to use his cane, one drawing a knife and another presenting the iron spike of his bow at our breasts. We had no arms. Campbell hereon called up the Cheen guard, who promptly interfered, and after a scuffle threw the whole Sikkim guard over the frontier most ignominiously and brought us on." At their first halt they were arrested.

Though both were arrested, Hooker was told soon after that he was not a prisoner, and no restriction was put upon his movement. Campbell, however, was kept in a dirty little hut, with all his servants and coolies. Hooker elected to share Campbell's misfortune voluntarily. Thus they marched under escort to Tumloong, the capital of Sikkim, where they arrived on November 10. Their Sikkim coolies were bound hand and foot and kept without food. Later Campbell was paraded in a village tied to the tail of a mule.[84a]

After imprisoning Campbell and Hooker, the Raja of Sikkim addressed a letter to the Governor-General on November 11, 1849. He states in this letter that though at the time of ceding Darjeeling he was given to understand that the Indian Government will give him no trouble, Dr. Campbell, soon after his arrival, began to settle Nepalese on the Sikkim side of frontier. To the Raja's protest he replied that he was acting on the Governor-General's order, and suppressed the Raja's letter to the Governor-General. Other charges included turning out the Raja's *vakil* from Darjeeling, stopping the entry of some merchandise from Sikkim into Darjeeling, and withholding his annual subsidy for two years. Then the Raja states that he permitted Dr. Hooker to visit Sikkim on the express condition that he should not cross into Tibet or Bhutan, but Dr. Campbell not only ignored his orders but threatened him that any obstruction on his part would lead to a war with India, and actually thrashed some of the Raja's men. Therefore, the Raja wanted the Governor-General to punish Dr. Campbell severely, send a better man in his place, and restore his slaves who had run away to Darjeeling. Till this was done he was detaining Drs. Hooker and Campbell.[84b]

These charges were never investigated. The Government of India informed the Raja of Sikkim, that if he had grounds for complaint against Campbell, he should have made representations, if necessary, through some other channel than Dr. Campbell, and the Government of India would possibly have afforded him proper satisfaction. But now that the Raja had committed the grievous offence of imprisoning not only Dr. Hooker but also Dr. Campbell, a British

representative, no complaint could be entertained till they were freed.[64c]

There cannot be possibly any doubt that Hooker and Campbell did actually enter into Tibetan territory. There is equally little doubt that it was the main cause of the whole trouble. Dr. Campbell, of course, denied this,[64d] but Captain Byng, who succeeded Campbell as Superintendent of Darjeeling, wrote in a letter that "the Tibetan trespass was the effectful cause of the evil (i.e. arrest)."[64e]

That Campbell was guilty of some high-handedness is indicated by the following extract from a letter he wrote from Sikkim to a friend on December 3, 1849: "The lever by which I worked was the Cheboo Lama, (whose) influence at the Durbar was, up to the time of my departure, sufficient for my purposes... ..but he lost his influence before I came thus far, and all his opponents united in a cry of 'traitor' against him, *and my penetration into the land further than anyone ever had been before* gave an additional occasion for charges against him; he was overthrown."[64f]

But although the charges against Campbell and Hooker were true, the Raja of Sikkim had to pay dearly for arresting them. Captain Byng, immediately on taking charge of his office as Superintendent of Darjeeling on 19 November, wrote to the Raja demanding the immediate release of the two prisoners, promising at the same time to forward the Raja's letters to the Governor-General.[64g] Soon afterwards, the rigours of their imprisonment were partially removed, and they were allowed to write letters.

As noted above,[64h] Lord Dalhousie took very strong measures against the Raja and annexed the hill tracts of Darjeeling west of the Tistā and the Murung (Terai) district. The Raja's allowance was also stopped.

In March, 1860, some relations of the Diwan of Sikkim kidnapped a few British subjects from British territory. As the Sikkim Government refused to deliver them, Campbell was authorized to occupy a part of Sikkim lying to the west of Ranjit river. On 1st November, 1860, Campbell, with a body of Sebundy Sappers under Captain Murray, established his outpost at Ringchingpong. They were attacked on November 27 by a mixed force of Tibetan and Sikkim Bhutias under the direction of the Diwan and forced to retreat. "The Sebundy Sappers, who hardly knew how to use their guns, disappeared in all direction. Dr. Campbell, Captain Murray, and Lt. Bevan, 73rd N.I., made their way to Darjeeling with only two attendants."[64i] Others came later, but one Havildar and nine-

teen sepoys were captured by the Sikkim army, and all the arms and ammunition of Campbell's force fell into their hands.[64j]

This minor disaster was due to Campbell's folly in exposing his untrained levy to an organized attack. Later on he tried to make out that he was treacherously attacked, but the Viceroy rightly remarked, that though the attack was genuine, he failed to see any treachery in it.[64k] As a matter of fact, Campbell knew of the impending attack by November 21, but seems to have taken no steps to protect his troops in his particularly ill chosen ground.[64l]

Campbell's retreat was followed by insolent threatening and, in some instances, by transgressions of Indian frontier on the part of hostile bands of Sikkimites. To stop this, and to retrieve British prestige, a force was sent under Lt. Col. Gawler, who made their way through the unknown country, where the terrain alone made the task of their advance quite difficult. But the Sikkim people hardly put up any fight, though Gawler on his way found many arrangements for obstructing him. Thus, practically without any fighting, the force reached Tumloong, the capital of Sikkim, early in March, 1861. The Diwan fled and the Sikkim Government accepted all the terms dictated by the Governor-General. On 28 March, 1861, a new treaty was concluded with the heir apparent, Sidkyong Nam Gyal, as his father, Maharaja Chug-Phui-Nam Gyal, who had taken refuge at Chumbi in Tibet, being afraid to come over, abdicated in favour of his son.

According to the terms of this treaty,[64m] all former treaties were abrogated, and provision was made for the future good conduct of Sikkim Government, which meant that Sikkim was practically reduced to vassalage. The Raja was fined Rs. 7,000, to be paid in three instalments; ex-Diwan Namgay and all his blood relations were expelled from Sikkim and were not to enter the country again. Regarding slavery it was stipulated that "inasmuch as many of the late misunderstandings have had their foundation in the custom which exists in Sikkim of dealing in slaves, the Government of Sikkim binds itself, from this date, to punish severely any person trafficking in human beings, or seizing persons for the purpose of using them as slaves."

The treaty further stipulated that full compensation should be made to those British subjects "who had either been kidnapped or pillaged by the Raja's people; it provided for full indemnification for public losses sustained in Dr. Campbell's retreat; it guaranteed the opening out of the country to trade, and the removal of all restrictions on travellers and merchants; it fixed the maximum rate of transit duties to be levied on goods between India and Tibet; it

provided for the construction of roads, and the security of those who traversed them". For facilitating trade a good road was constructed by the Indian Government from Darjeeling to the Tistā during their occupation of Sikkim.

Chug-Phui-Nam Gyal died in 1863 and was succeeded by his son Sidkyong Nam Gyal, to whom the annual allowance of Rs. 6,000, forfeited in 1860, was restored as an act of grace. In 1868 it was increased to Rs. 9,000, and in 1873 to Rs. 12,000. In 1867 the ruler of Sikkim was granted a permanent salute of 15 guns.

The trade-route between India and Tibet lay through Sikkim, and the question of promoting commercial intercourse with Tibet involved the Indian Government into complications in its relations with Sikkim. The Tibetans invaded Sikkim in 1886, as mentioned above,[64a] and not only occupied Lingtu on the top of a high peak crossed by the trade-route through Jeylap pass, but also built a stone fort there, about 12,600 ft. above the sea level, commanding the road between India and Tibet. This event placed the British in a great dilemma. The leaders and people of Sikkim were mostly pro-Tibetan, and as they did not ask for British help, nor desired it, there was no ostensible ground for interference by the British. At the same time they could not contemplate with equanimity the very probable contingency that Sikkim would become once for all a province of Tibet. For this "would react most formidably on the security of life and property" in the great European settlement of Darjeeling. This hill-station, dotted with European tea-plantations covering the slopes which face Sikkim, and the summer residence of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, was almost within a stone-throw of the stream which formed the boundary between British India and Sikkim. A large number of outlying tea-gardens were "absolutely at the mercy of possible raiders from Sikkim", and many British subjects, including Tibetans settled in Darjeeling, Lepchas, and Nepalese had large transactions and interests in Sikkim. The strong hold maintained over Sikkim by the British during the preceding twenty-five years removed all difficulties as Sikkim was virtually treated as a protectorate; but all this would cease if Sikkim were allowed to become a part of Tibet. Urged by these considerations the British Government decided to send a military expedition to force Tibet to quit Sikkim. The justification of this measure has thus been put forth by a high British official.

"Enough has perhaps been said to show that the obligation of driving the Tibetans out of Sikkim was imposed on us by the essential conditions of our policy towards the east Himalayan States; that this policy is a just and reasonable one; and that it involves the assumption on our part of no more authority than is necessary if we are to keep the peace in this particular corner of the Indian

Empire. To maintain this policy by the cheapest and most effective means was the sole object of the military operations commenced in March 1888, and terminated by the engagement of the 24th September of that year. For the better understanding of the principles on which this little war was conducted, a further glance at the conformation of the country will be needed. Lingtu is a peak about 12 miles to the Sikhim side of the frontier, over the top of which our road runs to the Jeylap pass. The sides of this peak are very precipitous, and the road could not have been taken along them except at great expense. A force holding Lingtu can therefore block the road, and can also command the steep downs below the Jeylap, where Tibetan herdsmen pasture their sheep and cattle during the summer months. Both points probably counted for something with the Tibetans."[65]

Although the Tibetans had not fled at the approach of the British force, as many fondly hoped, but offered a stubborn resistance, their medieval system of warfare could hardly resist for long the advance of the British troops. But the British played a waiting game in order to exhaust the resources of the Tibetans in the difficult terrain. The Tibetans showed a great deal of daring and skill in occupying the Tukola ridge, 13,550 ft. above the seal-level, and building a stone wall, two miles long, all along the crest of the ridge. But "notwithstanding this marvellous piece of impromptu engineering" the Tibetan army, about 11,000 strong, was driven away from this new position, losing nearly a tenth of their number in killed and wounded. It was a veritable rout and practically terminated the war which came to an end with the Anglo-Chinese agreement of 1890. It provided for "the boundary between Tibet and Sikkim being settled in accordance with our contentions; for the recognition of the British Protectorate over Sikhim, with exclusive control over its internal administration and its foreign relations; and in the future, for trade facilities, which have been systematically evaded. So far as Sikhim is concerned, the effect has been admirable; the country is progressing peaceably and rapidly, untroubled by Tibetan aggressiveness".[66] The net results of the war have been thus summed up by the same British official:

"Be the treaty never so meagre, we anyhow remain in possession of the disputed tract, while the roads and bridges made during the campaign ensure us the command of the passes against Tibetan inroads. Our influence is predominant in Sikhim; it has been vigorously asserted by the introduction of essential reforms in the government of the State, and we need not fear that it will be permitted to decline".[67]

"The reforms above mentioned were—the appointment of a Political Agent (Mr. J. C. White of the Public Works Department) at Guntok to assist the Maharaja in Council with his advice in the administration of affairs, the establishment of a Council for the conduct of ordinary civil, criminal and revenue work, the settlement of unoccupied waste land and land occupied by monasteries, and the

preservation of *sal* forests by bringing them under the direct control of the *darbar*."[68]

1. *CHBFP*, II. 209.
2. Ibid, 414.
3 This is based on W. K. Fraser Tytler, *Afghanistan* (1950), pp. 126 ff.
4 *CHI*, VI. 408.
4a. The *Cambridge Modern History* (1934), Vol. XII, p. 464.
5 Cf pp. 675 ff
6 *Mayo* (RI), pp. 127-8.
7. Ibid, 131.
8. Ibid, 133
9. *CHBFP*, II. 72-74.
10. Ibid, 74.
11. Ibid, 77-8
11a. See p. 676.
12. *CHBFP*., 78.
13. Ibid, 80.
14 Ibid, 81.
15. Letter from Lord Lytton to Cranbrook, dated 3 August, 1878. Quoted in D. K. Ghose, *England and Afghanistan*, pp. 38-40.
16. *PHE*, XII 283.
17 *Encycl. Brit* (14th Ed.), III 250.
18 *PHE*, XII 287
19. *Encycl Brit* (14th Ed), III. 250
20. Ibid. *PHE*, XII 283-91.
21 *CHI*, VI 408 See above, p 683
22 See pp. 383-4.
23 Buckle, *Life of Benjamin Disraeli*, VI. 155 (quoted in *CHBFP*, III 82, f.n., 1).
24. *CHBFP*, III. 187-8
25 See pp. 1006-7.
26 See p 1013
27 Davies, 164
28 Hutchinson, 12 ff
29 Davies, 166
30. *CHI*, VI. 429
31 Davies, 168
32 Ibid.
33 See p. 163
34 See p. 170
35 Sir T Raleigh, *Lord Curzon in India*, 501-3
36 Ibid, 502-3
37 *CHBFP*, II 412
38. *CHI*, VI 439, *CHBFP*, III 195
39 *CHBFP*. III 194
40 Ibid, 196
41 Ibid, 199
42 Ibid, 200
43 Sir Charles Bell, *Tibet, Past and Present* (1924), p 9
44. Lovat Fraser, *India under Curzon and after* (1911), p. 135.
45. Ibid, 136.
46 Bell, op cit, 44
47. Sir Francis Younghusband, *India and Tibet* (1910), p. 31.
48 Bell op cit, 45
48a This para is based upon M. L. Ahluwalia's article in *PIHRC*, XXX Part II, pp 1-8.
48b Bell, op cit, 59.
48c *IHQ*, XXXI. 32.
48d. Buckland (II. 842) assigns a different reason. He says: "While it (Mission) was waiting to start, negotiations commenced with China concerning the north-eastern frontier of Upper Burma, then recently annexed, and in deference to Chinese susceptibilities the Government of India consented to forego their intention of despatching a Mission to Lhasa". As the Mission was arranged with the full consent of China it is not easy to understand

why her susceptibilities would be wounded by it, save on the supposition that China did not like to do anything by force against the wish of Tibet. In any case, the views expressed by Bell and others that the Tibetan obduracy was the cause of cancelling the Mission seems to be the only valid conclusion.

49. Buckland, II. 843.
50 See p. 1071
51. Bell, op cit., 61. "Towards the close of 1894-5, a Commission, consisting of British, Chinese and Tibetan representatives, was appointed for the delimitation of the boundary between Sikhim and Tibet as defined in the Convention of 1890, but the Tibetans refused to supply transport for their party and the Chinese representative declared himself unable to move. Three pillars which were put up at 3 passes where there was no dispute about the boundary were knocked down. After waiting for some time in the expectation that orders from Peking might overcome Tibetan recusancy, the Commission was broken up in August 1895, and further proceedings abandoned for the time; but it was in contemplation to renew the demarcation in the following year" (Buckland, II. 911).
52 Buckland, II. 910.
53. Bell, op. cit., 61-2, Buckland, II. 910.
54. Bell, op. cit., 61-2.
55. Cf. the exclamations of a Sindhi, quoted on p. 203.
56 Lovat Fraser, op. cit., 138.
57 *Encycl. Brit.* (s v. Tibet), Lovat Fraser, op cit., 138
58. Tieh-Tseng Li, *The Historical Status of Tibet* (1956), p 82 It was evidently a great crime in the eye of Lord Curzon that an Oriental State should not open its doors wide to western imperialism.
59 Ibid, 83.
60 Bell, op. cit, 284 ff
61 Lovat Fraser, op. cit, 143
62. Raleigh, op. cit., 44
63 Lovat Fraser, op cit, 145-6
64 Aitchison states. "The settlement of Darjeeling advanced rapidly, chiefly by immigration from the neighbouring States of Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan, in all of which slavery was prevalent. The increased importance of Darjeeling, under free institutions, was a source of early and constant jealousy and annoyance to the Diwan Namgay, who was himself the monopolist of all trade in Sikkim, and this feeling was shared by the Lamas and other principal people in the country, who lost their rights over slaves settling as British subjects in British territory " Aitchison, XII 52

Aitchison does not give any reference for his statements About the Diwan. it may be noted that he was the prime mover in the arrest of Campbell and Hooker, and, according to their accounts, was responsible for their plight As will be shown later, one of the conditions of the treaty was that the Diwan should be expelled from Sikkim It is possible, therefore, that the Diwan had a greater interest in Darjeeling than others.

64a. Extracts from Dr Hooker's letters to a friend at Darjeeling No 230, 29th December, 1849, Poll and Foreign Depts. Letter from Dr. Campbell to a friend at Darjeeling dated Tumloong, December 2nd Foreign. Poll. Cons. 29th December, 1849, No 287.

It is difficult to ascertain the effect of these letters on the policy of the Government of India, for the dates of their receipt are not given.

64b. Translation of a *Kharita* from the Raja of Sikkim to the most Noble the Governor-General of India. dated Bengalee 27 Kartick, 1256, November, 11th, 1849. O.C. No. 197, 29th December, 1849, Foreign & Political Dept.

It is interesting to find the Raja of Sikkim using the Bengali Calendar In this connection the Vakeel of the Raja wrote to Captain Byng, officiating Superintendent of Darjeeling, on November 20, 1849: "Messrs. Campbell and Hooker were allowed to see all my country. But I told them I could not let them cross the frontier. They would not mind what I said, but contrary to my orders went from a place called Phare....upon the Sahib's crossing the frontiers the Chinese were very angry, and said I have entered into friendship with the English for the purpose of taking their country." Extracts from the Raja's Vakeel's letter to Captain Byng, dated November 20, 1849, O C. No. 267-9, 29th December, 1849, Foreign Political Department.

64c. Letter to the Raja of Sikkim from the Government of India, dated 30th November, 1849 Foreign Dept. Poll Cons, 29th December, 1849, No 224.

64d. Letter from Dr Campbell to a friend at Darjeeling, dated Tumloong, December 2nd, Foreign Poll. Cons, 29th December, 1849, No. 287

64e Letter from the Officiating Superintendent of Darjeeling to the Secretary to the Government of India, Foreign Dept, dated Darjeeling 9th December, 1849, O C No 267-9, 29th December, 1849 Foreign and Poll Depts No 374 of 1849 para 5 It should be noted that Byng was superseded on December 11 by C H Lushington See Lushington's letter to the Raja of Sikkim dated 11th December, 1849, Foreign Dept. Poll Cons 29th December, 1849, Nos 270-73

64f Letter from Dr Campbell to a friend at Darjeeling dated Tumloong, December 2nd-3rd, Foreign Dept Poll Cons 29th December, 1849, No 287. Italics mine

64g Foreign Pol 29th December, 1849 No 196A

64h See p 89

64i Col. J C Gawler *Sikkim with Hints on Mountain and Jungle Warfare*, London, 1837 p 10

64j Ibid, p. 10 Among the arms captured by the Sikkimese was a 3 pounder gun Why Campbell took this piece of artillery when he does not seem to have any man fit to use it is nowhere explained

64k Letter dated 28th December 1860, to the Hon ble Ashley Eden For Part A February 1861, No 147-149 para 4 This letter is published in Gawler's *Sikkim* Appendix p 89

64l Gawler, op cit,

64m For details of this treaty, cf Aitchison, op cit

64n See p 1061

65 Buckland, II 847

66 Ibid, 852-3

67 Ibid, 852.

68 Ibid, 853.

BOOK II

ECONOMIC HISTORY

(1818 to 1905)

CHAPTER XXXIV

TRADE AND COMMERCE

The Charter of 1813 is a landmark in the history of Indian economy. It abolished the East India Company's monopoly of India trade which had controlled the extent and moulded the character of Indo-British commerce for two hundred years. It opened India to the British free traders and exposed her to the full blasts of the Industrial Revolution. It precipitated the destruction of her age-old cotton industry, clinched her dependence on raw material production, and subjected her primary producers to the vagaries of international economic forces As commercial capitalism, represented by the Company, succumbed to the inexorable force of industrial capitalism, represented by Lancashire and Sheffield, the agrarian economy of India was geared to the industrial economy of Great Britain

The defeat of the Company was brought about by a concatenation of tendencies implicit in its evolution and forces which grew outside it and inimical to it. The East India Company was not merely a trading body but an imperial power, and had hopelessly run into debt in pursuing the will-o-the-wisp of augmenting its trading capital with the revenues of a growing empire. The empire grew apace, but more rapidly the debt. In order to secure capital for expansion which the Court seldom sent and never in time, the governments in India had incurred remittable debt, i.e allowed their creditors to demand principal and interest in London. Since remittance through ordinary trading channels was difficult due to the Napoleonic Wars and general commercial stagnation, the creditors pressed for remittance by means of bills on debt account. From 1806 onwards the Court of Directors had been deluged under such bills and had to petition Parliament for loans every year to keep up its credit. In 1813 the Company possessed no bargaining power to counteract the pressure of the agency houses, which demanded free movement of capital between England and India, the manufacturers, who urged import of cheap raw materials and export of surplus produce, and the outports like Liverpool, which needed employment of shipping, rendered idle by the stoppage of the American and the continental trade.

The possibilities of unfettered India trade had already been seen during the operation of Wellesley's liberal trade policy in 1798 and 1800-02.[1] In spite of continuous war and constant frictions with

monopoly in the first decade of the 19th century, the percentage of Bengal's private trade with London had surpassed that of her private trade with other quarters.[2]

The foreigners like the French, the Dutch, the Portuguese and the Americans had been ousted from the field, following vicissitudes of war. Success, as yet limited, fed hopes, and hopes, though wild, proved more potent than the Company's Charter rights which had worn thin through half a century of financial and commercial bungling Even considered as a trade of remittance, the Company's trade had been facing great hardship for some time. The cotton manufacture of India, the foundation of its commercial prosperity for centuries, was tottering on its last legs In 1812 No. 40 yarn cost 2s. 6d. per lb in England and 3s. 7d. in India, while No. 60 yarn cost 3s 6d per lb. in England and 6s. in India.[3] Secondly, the productive capacity of the British mills had been greatly enhanced by frequent improvements and wider use of steam power Thirdly, the home manufacture had been insulated by a prohibitive tariff against Indian piece-goods which ran up to £3 16s. 8d % on warehousing plus £78 5s 8d % on home consumption. Fourthly, besides duties in England, Indian piece-goods had to pay a ruinous transit duty of 15% in India (5% of which was drawn back on export)[4] Fifthly, the continental market had been closed to Indian goods by Napoleon's Berlin and Milan decrees, and the American market sealed by Jefferson's embargo of 1808 and the Anglo-American War of 1812 This deplorable situation was reflected in the decline of the Company's indent for Bengal piece-goods from S R[5] 66 lakhs in 1803 to S.R 20 lakhs in 1813. The muslins were the hardest hit In the former year 163,220 pieces had been ordered, in the latter only 11,385. The indent for calicoes was just halved and that for other qualities fell to one-third[6] Silk was the only article which returned a profitable remittance, but its supply was not elastic Cotton was out of the question after restoration of peace with the United States. Indian sugar paid a duty of £5% ad valorem on warehousing and £37 16s. 3d.% plus 3s. 2d per cwt. on home consumption—all to the profit of the West Indies sugar interest, then influential in Parliament On the eve of the Charter of 1813 the Company was sending bullion to England in default of commodities which India could not procure or Britain would not take on fair terms These facts, however, neither damped the ardour nor deterred the efforts of the private traders They even used these as final arguments against monopoly, as apt illustrations to the text of Adam Smith.

The majority of agency houses and country traders in India had eagerly supported the cause of free trade, but the top men had

not overlooked the snag. The Palmers feared that a wild scramble would ensue in banking, insurance and indigo business. The Fairlies were not prepared to share the cream of country trade with a host of fortune-hunters likely to be let loose with free trade. They were principally interested in the untrammelled movement of capital between India and England, which would enable them to shape their investment policy with greater smoothness and to switch over from one field of enterprise to another with greater alacrity. More rivals without a substantial increase of trading capital or a speculative glut without any actual relation to demand were not their view of the blessings of free trade for which they had been fighting the Company since the last decade of the eighteenth century. Here, too, the well-grounded apprehensions of a few were submerged under the illusions of the many, who, besides nursing the mundane hope of windfall profits, liked to strike a blow for Christ and civilization by carrying the Manchester cotton goods into the remotest Indian village

They ignored several fundamental factors in their impetuous rush for free trade First, the Company still possessed the right to ply a remittance trade which, in view of its sovereign character and its access to Indian revenues, it might wield to the detriment of the freetraders Secondly, the Company still possessed the China monopoly The Indo-British trade was really a three-cornered trade. Indian remittances, not procurable at all or not profitable to procure in Indian goods, had always been sent through China Similarly, British manufactures unsaleable in India, were pushed in the Indies or China through the channel of China trade. Again, the China trade could be easily financed by illicit opium sales at Canton. Without the China end the Indian end would not tie and the China end was in the hands of the Company. Thirdly, Indian resources, now chiefly consisting of raw materials, were insufficient to meet various demands of public and private remittance. For a harmonious working of Indo-British trade immediate development of Indian raw materials was called for, which involved large scale investment of British capital in their production, and, secondly, abolition of transit duties in India and import duties in London, i.e. free trade in the true sense of the term and not its pale shade, the mere abolition of the Company's India monopoly These conditions might not be forthcoming without the annihilation of the Company and, perhaps, without the industrialization of India.

Industrialization of India was, however, unthinkable in the colonial context and, if at all proposed, would have been scotched by the manufacturing interest (not always for fear of rivalry—they

should have learnt better from the American experience). Moreover, the financial structure of the agency houses on the one hand, and the administrative structure of the Company's Government on the other, would have brought any such experiment to nought. The debris of these obsolete systems had first to be removed to allow the beginnings of industrialization in India to be securely laid. For the present the common interest of the parties concerned, viz., the British manufacturers, the British capitalists, the agency houses, the shipowners, the Indian Government and the Indian *Zamindars*, was a commercial, not an industrial, revolution in India The story of Indian commerce between 1814 and 1914 is the story of this commercial revolution, guided by the paramount needs and directed to the increasing profits of the Metropolis, but, in the process, inevitably leading to the economic transformation of India.

The immediate consequence of free trade was glut There was a speculative boom following the break-up of the Continental System and Napoleon's unsuccessful Russian campaign The free-traders hoped to effect their purchases more cheaply with Manchester piecegoods and carry them more profitably in their own ships to the less expensive outports. To pay for heavy surplus exports from India between 1814 and 1817[6] they imported more and more of metals, woollens and cottons. Compared to 1814, merchandise import from U K quadrupled in 1818[7] A reduction of Bengal customs (followed up in Bombay and Madras), which heavily discriminated in favour of British imports, helped this process But in the field of exports the free-traders could not score a similar success. Unable to compete with the Company's remittance trade in silk[8] or to purchase indigo at prohibitive prices, they took to raw cotton, where, too, they found in the Company a rival. The latter's silk indent rose to 73 lakhs in 1820 and cotton indent to 9,000 bales. When the cotton market in China collapsed in 1822 and in London a year later, the Company was forced to compete for indigo. The decline of Indian cotton manufacture had accentuated this rivalry over remittance. The limited resources of India, now mainly consisting of raw materials, could not resolve it. These had not only to provide for the excessive import of merchandise from U.K. and of treasure from America and Europe,[9] but also for remittance of various kinds on the public and private accounts.[10] As procurement of goods on such a large scale became more and more difficult, the terms of trade began to swing against India. The exchange value of rupee fell from 2s. 6d. to 2s. in 1822, and still lower afterwards. Since remittable capital could not be sent home on favourable terms, it sought speculative investment in indigo or opium. A trade depression in

England[11] put further pressure on import of British goods which worsened the crisis. A desperate attempt was made to send remittance via China which explains the Malwa opium boom and the increase of exports to China from S R. 34,98,188 in 1819 to S.R. 1,09,61,651 in 1822.[12] Trade with Lisbon was considerable up to 1816-7, but it declined from the next year with partial attempts at recovery in 1818, 1820 and 1822. It depended on bullion, and as it became less profitable to send bullion, the trade shrank. The constant struggle between Portugal and her American possessions disturbed trade with Brazil. Trade with United States went on well up to 1818-9 and fell off for causes similar to those that operated in the case of Britain. Denmark and Holland had an insignificant share in the Bengal trade and trade with France did not fare well after 1818. Trade with Gibraltar and Malta flourished for a while after the passage of the Malta Trade Act, and trade with South America was more or less stable up to the last but one year in the series. Imports from China fell greatly after 1819 as Bengal opium came into competition with Malwa and Turkish opium, and as the cotton speculation of 1819 and 1820 came to grief. Trade with Penang and Sumatra showed a similar stress, though the former began to recover in 1820 Though Java had been in the Dutch hands since 1816, Bengal's trade with her prospered with one or two breaks. But, feeling oppressed by the illiberal regulations of the Dutch, the British private merchants sought a vantage point in the China Sea which would protect their trade route to the Eastern Islands as well as serve as a free emporium for British and Chinese articles. Manila's trade declined as direct connection of Great Britain with Spanish America (now independent) was established. The exigencies of the Maratha War increased private trade between Calcutta and Malabar from 1817 to 1819, but the end of war heralded a fall. There was some attempt to compensate for its decline through an increased trade with the Gulfs till their direct trade with Britain affected it in 1822. Though imports from Coromandel were more or less constant, exports suffered. The speculative trade with Mauritius spent itself by 1817.

Between 1823 and 1833 the grievances of the free-traders piled up and converged on the destruction of the Company's remittance trade and China monopoly. As the same conditions prevailed, the exchange rate continued to fall and the agency houses, pestered with abundant capital, recklessly invested all in indigo. It caused an indigo boom which inevitably led to a demand by the European planters for ownership of land i.e. introduction of the plantation system.

The bottom of this speculation was knocked out by flight of capital caused, first, by the Burma War (1824), secondly, by Amherst's policy of debt conversion (1825), and thirdly, by better terms offered by the London money market. The agency houses, which worked on private deposits, acutely felt the shortage of capital. A continuous trade depression in England[13] and a fall of prices of Indian goods in the London market[14] increased their distress. Failure of some indigo planters at this awkward moment made their cup of misery full. During the boom years the six principal agency houses had invested as much as 160 lakhs in indigo concerns. They now faced total ruin.

Though the utilitarian Government of Lord William Bentinck helped them with huge loans, the boom brought its inevitable nemesis. The free-traders were not much to blame, the Company's remittance trade had left no alternative other than indigo.[15] Piece-goods had no prospects. Indian sugar had no chance against the produce of West Indies in favour of which a discriminating duty had been devised in 1825. But who would supply the circulating capital to the extensive enterprise in indigo? The agency houses looked forward to import of capital from U. K. but it was not forthcoming without the guarantee of a plantation system. Bentinck espoused their cause with great ardour.[16] Six agency houses, he found, financed the greater part of indigo production, controlled the lac and rum trade, owned 59 out of 91 vessels at Calcutta, several steamers, all the docks, the only textile mill in India and collieries at Burdwan. But they were not owners of the capital stock, only managers, and since the owners transferred their funds to London at the slightest turn in the money market, commerce or enterprise in India did not rest on real capital. Introduction of British capital was imperative for saving, let alone for developing Indian economy, and should be allured with the guarantee of landownership.

The Court, however, turned down Bentinck's proposal as tantamount to colonization. Its refusal brought immediate disaster to the agency houses. The Palmer & Co. failed first. In spite of cash loans and enforcement of a semi-plantation system, the continued depression in England, increasing export of bullion to meet adverse trade balance, now unpayable in commodities, and further drop of indigo prices led to the fall of other agency houses. Asian trade could not save them. Its decline had been patent for some time past and reflected in the decline of ship-building at Calcutta.[17]

The Charter of 1833 rung down the curtain on the Company's trade. On the eve of the Charter, Britain sent 56-8/16% of Bengal's total imports and received 52-8/16% of her total exports (including

those on the Company's account which amounted to about 21%). Foreigners had been nearly ousted from the country trade.[19] Free trade had wrought far-reaching changes in the economy of Northern India. Imports by land into Calcutta, the principal port of Indo-British commerce before 1833, had gone up by 440%, compared to that of 1795. As most of it was for export, we may say that free trade, though hampered by the Company, had led to increase of production by at least three times. Unfortunately, the increase had been mainly in indigo and raw materials, liable to fluctuate with slight shifts in world prices. Indian export economy, no longer dependent on manufacture, had become extremely vulnerable to the vagaries of the international market.

Till 1833 the greater portion of Indo-British commerce was confined to Calcutta. Trade at Bombay was mainly country trade in cotton, and Mālwa opium with China, and in sundry articles with the Red Sea and the Gulf region.

Annual statistical report on trade at Madras port appears from 1813-14. Private trade of Madras with London was meagre in the early years of the nineteenth century. Merchandise worth Arcot Rupees 10,42,742 and treasure worth Arcot Rupees 5,92,789 were imported from London in 1807 while exports to London amounted to merchandise worth Arcot Rupees 84,126 only China, America and the Eastern Islands had a larger share of her export trade.[19a] With free trade London's share increased In 1817-18 merchandise worth Arcot Rupees 29,11,041 was imported from London and exports to that region rose to Arcot Rupees 10,35,677 [19b] The foreign commerce of Madras suffered a depression for several years after 1818. In 1824 private imports from London had declined to Madras Rupees 20,35,130, though exports reached Madras Rupees 30,74,618.[19c] This pattern continued to prevail till the indigo and piecegoods markets at London were seriously affected in the third decade In 1832 the total private imports by sea were Madras Rupees 92,16,328 in merchandise, of which London sent Madras Rupees '3,39,693, while of total private exports of Madras Rupees 1,39,36,741 in merchandise London's share was Madras Rupees 49,40,999.[19d] Britain was now sending cotton piecegoods to Madras in ever increasing quantities.

From 1833 these ports, especially Bombay, began to come into their own. Calcutta predominated, however, for a long period. Certain changes in trade policy were effected after 1833. Duties on internal trade of Bengal were abolished in 1836, and the two other provinces followed suit. Secondly, a new scale of duties was adopted for external trade in 1836, viz. 3% on British metals and 3½% on

British cotton, twist, yarn and silk piece-goods. Thirdly, a new currency was introduced in 1835, called the Company's Rupee, with an official exchange rate of 2s 6d.

The abolition of China monopoly was at first a great incentive to the importers. Merchandise imports at Calcutta rose from S R. 1,95,81,986 in 1833 to Company's Rupees 6,39,49,283 in 1844, after recessions in 1837 and 1842. There was a set back, however, between 1845 and 1848 when the merchandise imports fell to Comp. Rs 4,73,19,143. An increasing import of bullion compensated to some extent the fall in merchandise. But this failed to happen in 1847

Imports from U K formed a high percentage of this—increasing from Sicca Rupees 1,38,92,944 in 1833 to Company's Rupees 3,73,40,108 in 1840 With recessions between 1841 and 1843 it rose once again to 4 84 crores in 1844, which was 75% of Bengal's total imports ' For years British manufacturers were flooding India with cotton yarn and textiles. The import of the former rose from S R. 22,59,185 in 1833 to Comp. Rs. 1,06,98,646 in 1846 and that of the latter, from S R 40 64,920 to Comp Rs 2,01,72,704' Together they formed 72% of total British imports into Bengal.

The export of merchandise was steadily rising up to 1845 (except in 1841-42 , from S R 4,04,62,516 in 1833 to Comp. Rs 10, 08, 38, 207 in 1845, i.e. it had trebled in a decade It was more and more impossible for Bengal to pay for the rising crescendo of piece-goods import from U K , though she sent as much as Comp Rs. 5,60 46 414 to that country in 1843 and more than 4 crores in 1847, i e 48% of her total exports The Company had been sending its remittances by means of financial rather than commercial transactions i e making advances to Calcutta merchants on the security of Indian produce at a favourable exchange rate The British merchants had to pay higher rates than their Indian rivals and, in 1847, trying to compete with the Company's merchants in the granting of long credits over-reached themselves and failed This caused the crisis of 1847-48[20] with adverse effect on the commercial and financial life of Calcutta Many agency houses crashed in 1848, including the pioneer Indian enterprise of Carr, Tagore and Company [21]

The export of the Bengal piece-goods had fallen to 1.3 lakhs only in 1843, of cotton to about 2 lakhs in 1849, and, after a hectic rise (3 19 crores in 1843 out of which 2.32 crores went to U.K.), indigo declined continuously up to 1847 There were increased exports of grain, hides and sugar, but not enough to keep the trade in equilibrium. Opium was the lynch pin of South Asian trade and Far Eastern foreign policy of Britain In 1837 China took 1.8 crores

worth of opium, i.e. 86% of the total export in that article. With the China War impending, its export fell to 39 lakhs in 1840. Then began its spectacular rise on the crest of the British victory—to 3.13 crores in 1846, of which China 'took' 2.6 crores.

When we analyse Madras and Bombay figures we find the former lagging far behind those of the latter and, of course, of Bengal. The Madras imports rose from £656,405 in 1834 to £1,108,817 in 1847, while Bombay showed a rise from £2,852,369 in 1834 to £6,618,122 in 1843, the highest in the series. Even when it fell, it stood at £4,043,606 or about 3.2 crores of Company's Rupees in 1847. So far as exports were concerned, Bombay sent £3,037,079 in 1834, which rose to £6,692,393 in 1843 but fell to £4,379,947 in 1847, still half of Bengal's exports. Madras exports rose only from £992,485 to £1,491,558 between 1834 and 1847. Bengal exports were more than six times those of Madras.

The shock of 1847-48 did not last long. Imports once again began to increase from 1849 till they reached £31,093,065 for British India in 1857—merchandise and bullion almost in equal share. Imports of Bengal and Bombay were about the same—the former in the region of £15 millions, the latter in that of £13.6 millions. Madras imported only £2.6 millions. The U.K., as before, sent the main share and maintained the tempo up to 1869. The other remarkable change was in the realm of exports. Indian exports had risen from £14,738,435 in 1847 to £28,278,474 in 1857, i.e. doubled in the decade preceding transfer of India to the Crown, and yet lagged behind the prodigious imports since 1855. Bullion was pouring into the country, especially from U.K., which trebled its exports to India between 1854 and 1859. This was partly to pay for the exports from India, but mainly to be invested in India in railways, tea gardens and jute manufacture. The railway age in India had begun.

The boom continued up to 1866. Imports of merchandise doubled between 1856 and 1865 and that of bullion rose by 85%. The growth of exports was more marked. Between 1855 and 1864 India's exports were about trebled and most of it was in merchandise,[22] Bombay alone sending £40½ millions worth of goods in 1864.[23] U.K. received the major share of exports—£46.8 millions in that year.

The cause of this boom was the American Civil War which whipped up an abnormal demand for Indian raw cotton in U.K. Indigo kept varying between £1.6 millions and £2 millions—there being great trouble over indigo riots in Bengal bordering on rebellion. Grain exports were in the region of £6 millions in 1864. Ano-

ther Opium War had increased exports of opium to £12.4 millions in 1862. But in the sixties cotton was king.

A series of experiments to improve the culture of cotton were ordered by the Court as early as 1829. These were started in the Bombay Deccan and Karnatak. To encourage cotton production the government of Bombay freed land sown with cotton from land tax for 5 years,[24] but the concession was withdrawn at the behest of the Court after 2 years. Besides a heavy land-tax, lack of adequate irrigation and good communication had always been obstacles to cotton production In 1848 a Select Committee was appointed by Parliament under the chairmanship of John Bright to inquire into the possibilities of Indian raw cotton The Manchester Chamber of Commerce was behind this move and its President, Thomas Bazley, was an important witness. In that year India exported only £1,775,309 worth of cotton Due to mercantile incentive, which led to experiments in New Orleans cotton in Bombay, cotton export rose to £5 6 millions in 1859 Then the Civil War broke out in America, nearly stopping cotton trade of the Slave States with U.K. A phenomenal speculation in Indian cotton ensued which raised its exports to £37,573,637 or about seven times in five years.[25]

The end of the Civil War in 1864 took the bottom out of this abnormal boom. The ensuing depression affected Western India between 1866 and 1871, causing failures of many enterprises at Bombay, financed by the speculative profits of cotton trade[26] But during these years a commercial revolution had been taking place, accompanied by the first phase of industrial evolution in India It was in the sixties that the railways expanded rapidly and the beginnings of jute and cotton industries were laid. For the first time in India's history British capital had begun to flow into India on a grand scale.

As Jenks says, "from 1857 to 1865 the major movement of British capital was towards India, to transform the land with public works".[27] So long the wars in India had been fought with savings and spoils of the Company's servants and the savings of the Indians Independent mercantile establishments like banking, insurance, shipping, etc, and indigo manufacture, as well as tea and coffee plantations were mainly financed in a similar way. They did not constitute an export of British capital to India. In the thirty years between 1845 and 1875, however, about £95 millions were invested by British companies in Indian guaranteed railways,[28] most of it between 1857 and 1865.[29]

Besides railways. British capital was being increasingly invested in jute manufacture, tea gardens, banks, shipping and, of course,

as before, in India debt. About £20 millions had been invested in jute and tea.[50] All this explains the increase of bullion import between 1854 and 1869.

Indo-British trade returned to normalcy after 1870. Import of merchandise rose from £32,927, 520 to £41,166,003 between 1869 and 1879. Of treasure there was a decline, the peak period of railway investment having passed before 1870. After a fall during the depression years import from U K. once more began to rise, though the increase between 1869 and 1879 was by £2 millions only The trade in cotton goods kept stationary in the '70s round £16 millions —one of the reasons being the famine of 1876-78 The export position was better after the set-back between 1866 and 1875 Merchandise exported in 1879 amounted to £67,212,363, almost on the scale of 1864 Exports to U K still remained low—at an average of £27 millions These were the first years of the "Great Depression" in Britain.

Cotton had not recovered In 1879 only about £11 millions in raw cotton were exported i e. less than one-third of the figures for 1865 But indigo was coming out of the doldrums of the last thirty years and jute, jute manufactures, tea, coffee, grains and hides were showing distinct improvements.

We have seen how the greater part of private British capital was sunk in indigo during the second decade of the nineteenth century, and how its collapse in 1826 and 1828-30 brought down the principal agency houses in Calcutta Between 1833 and 1861 indigo plantations went along the same evil system of advance and hereditary debt But troubles with unwilling *ryots* multiplied[52] and there was keen competition with other forms of investment. Its exports had declined to £2 millions before the Indigo Rebellion in Bengal forced the planters to transfer their investments to Bihar, Banaras and the Doab. In 1881-82 about £3 6 millions worth of indigo was exported, and in 1885-86 about £3 millions.

But tea bade fair to replace indigo in the last decades of the century. The Charter of 1833 had been a Charter for the planters, who were allowed to lease and own property in their own names. Discovery of the tea plant in the foothills of Assam was simultaneous. The combination of these two factors produced the Assam Company in 1839 with a capital of £200,000, to whom the government sold its experimental garden next year The Assam Company was the only one in the field up to 1850, fighting an uphill task. But with continued Government help the tide turned after 1852 The years between 1856 and 1871 saw remarkable growth of tea cultivation in Assam. Production went up from 216,000 lb. in 1850 to

6,251,143 lb. in 1871, and the area under cultivation, from 1876 acres to 31,303 acres. Another 70,000 acres were under tea in Darjeeling.[31] Due to speculation, most rife between 1859-65,[32] exports of tea rose from £35,525 (1848) to £1,050,515 (1869) in twenty years! It went on increasing by £1 million every five years till the average production reached 90 million lb. in 1890. The first coffee plantation had been established at Fort Gloster in 1823. Since Bengal produced poor crops, coffee cultivation migrated to the highlands of South India.[33] After a steady growth between 1830 and 1860, there was a coffee boom in the sixties. While £188,532 worth of coffee was exported in 1859, £801,908 worth was exported in 1864 and £1,633,032 in 1879 The outbreak of the 'borer' disease and competition of Brazilian coffee, acutest between 1877-87, caused a set-back to coffee production, which fell from 34 million lb. in 1885 to about 30 million lb. in 1895.[34]

It was in jute and jute manufacture, however, that the future of the Indo-British trade lay. The possibility of hand-woven jute goods, like gunnies, had been seen even before 1833. About 9 million pieces were exported in 1829.[35] Handloom jute industry prospered between 1833 and 1856—exports in this line rose from S.R. 2,15,340 in 1833 to Company's Rs 41,20,881 in 1856. Raw jute exports increased also from about a lakh or two to Company's Rs. 27,49,754. Most of it went to Dundee to feed its spinning and weaving mills, established since 1832 Entrepreneurs wanted to set up jute mills in India to avoid cost of transport of raw material The Crimean War was a godsend to them. It cut off the supply of Russian hemp and made U.K. turn to India. A jute boom ensued in the seventies. In 1874 export in raw jute amounted to £3,246,882 and in jute manufacture to £238,640. Five years later, the former rose to £4,370,032 and the latter to £1,195,481.[36] Another boom occurred between 1882 and 1885, when five new mills started and the number of looms doubled that of 1875. In 1884 the Indian Jute Mills Association was founded to regulate output After a few bad years before the nineties jute manufacture looked up again,[37] and its exports amounted to £4,747,797 in 1895,—a 400% rise compared to the figure for 1879. Export in raw jute amounted to £9,992,861—a 230% rise. Jute and jute manufacture together had become the most valuable articles of export at the end of the nineteenth century About 5.47 crores of rupees had been invested in jute manufacture by 1892.[38]

Such an outburst of manufacturing and business enterprise led to further expansion of Indian trade. Export trade was specially helped by the fall of the international value of silver from 50 cents

an oz. in 1850 to only 31 cents in 1893. The rupee began to fluctuate in terms of sterling. It was worth about 1.6 shillings between 1878 and 1885, about 1.4 shillings between 1885 and 1890, and about 1.2 shillings between 1890 and 1897. The imports were affected adversely, however, since the falling value of silver led to constantly rising prices for the imported goods.

Since the trade statistics of this period were kept in tens of rupees and the rupee fluctuated in terms of sterling, the rise of merchandise imports from £41,166,003 in 1879 to 71,975,370 tens of rupees in 1890 and of treasure from £ 11.6 million to 21 million tens of rupees do not represent a poroportionate real increase. Imported cotton goods worth 27,241,987 tens of rupees really represented £17,069,386. Compared to the figure for 1879 it shows very little actual increase. Increases in other goods should be considered with similar caution. About two-thirds of imports came from U.K.

Exports in merchandise rose to 100,227,348 tens of rupees of which U.K. took about 33 6 millions, which is not very impressive. On the other hand, exports to China and Germany were rising fast. Several causes may be assigned to the growth of exports—(1) fall in the sterling value of rupee, (2) free trade, (3) rapid railway development in the eighties when as many miles were laid as in the previous twenty seven years, and (4) rise of world demand for jute goods resulting from exploitation of grain lands in America and Australia. This was reflected in the further rise of merchandise exports to 114,334,738 tens of rupees in 1895, while merchandise imports rose only by a million. Imports from U.K. fell by more than seven million tens of rupees, though exports to that country rose by three million tens of rupees. Since India had begun to produce her own yarn, twist and cloth, imports in that branch suffered, almost accounting for the decline in total imports from U.K.

Though indigo exports were more or less steady, those in raw cotton—about 14 million tens of rupees—reached the low level of 1880. Grain exports were on a larger scale. Egypt, Mauritius, Brazil and Malay were now dependent on rice supplies from India. A brisk trade had developed in tanned hides with U.K. and in raw hides with U.S.A. and Germany. Exports in oil seeds increased from 6 million tens of rupees in 1881 to 16 million in 1893, though these fell to 9.7 million in 1895.[39] But the most significant new feature in India's trade was the development of exports in cotton yarn and cloth, manufactured in Indian mills with Indian capital.

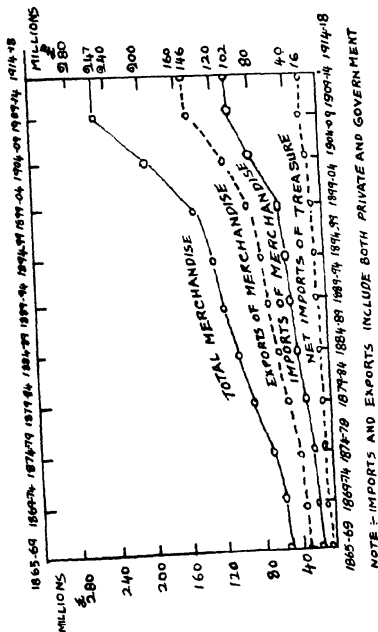
The high price of raw cotton during 1861-65 retarded, but the spread of railways helped, the growth of Indian cotton manufacture. After a temporary slump in the early '70s, the second cotton boom

occurred between 1875 and 1877, by which time India had 51 cotton mills. A third boom between 1885 and 1890 took the number of mills to 137. In the beginning the Indian mills concentrated on production of yarn for export, mainly to China. The value of yarn exported rose from 1.4 million tens of rupees in 1881 to 6 8 million tens of rupees in 1895. Very little of cloth manufactured in India was consumed within the country, which explains the rise of its exports to 3.4 million tens of rupees The staple exports of India were still jute, jute goods, tea, grains, oil seeds and indigo, most of which were run by the British managing agents with British capital.

Statistical Abstracts give the value of trade since 1899 in pound sterling as the value of rupee had, meanwhile, been fixed at ls. 4d. For the sake of comparison with the previous decade we have reduced the figures for 1905 into tens of rupees Imports in merchandise went up to £ 68,722,713 (103 million tens of rupees) and in treasure to £ 13,947,526 (20 million tens of rupees). Merchandise alone registered an increase of more than 30 million tens of rupees in ten years. Of this U K supplied £ 45,825,871 (68 million tens of rupees) in merchandise—66% of India's total imports in goods—of which more than £ 24 million was in cotton manufactures. Metals showed a large increase and sugar had more than doubled.

The first years of this century saw a boom in the export trade. Merchandise exports rose from 114 million tens of rupees in 1895 to 161 million tens of rupees (£ 107,812,022), of which U K took about 39.9 million tens of rupees (£ 26,665,055). Though this was an improvement, the flow of India's export trade was more and more orientated towards Western Europe, U.S A and the Far East. In 1905 Germany took about £ 9.7 millions worth of Indian goods, U.S A.—£ 8.6 millions, France—£ 6.3 millions, and Belgium £ 4.3 millions, while China took £ 14 millions and Japan £ 6 6 millions The European countries were buying raw cotton and half of raw jute, besides rice, hides and seeds. Japan was the biggest consumer of raw cotton, and China, of twist and yarn. Production and export of raw materials once again responded to demand. Thirty-five lakhs of bales of raw jute (double that of 1890),[40] worth more than £ 11 millions, were now exported The export of cotton twist and yarn amounted to £ 8 millions, double that of 1895. Indian cotton manufacturer, however, was badly hit by the unjust countervailing duty of 3½% levied in 1896.[41] Plague in Bombay, followed by famines, added to his difficulties. American speculation in raw cotton raised its price sky high Depression in the China market disturbed the spinning industry.

Among articles produced with European capital, jute manufacture easily held the first place. Its exports rose to 12 million tens of rupees (more than £ 8 millions), i.e. three times that of 1895. Tea was not doing well since 1898. Its exports remained near 8.8 mil-

lion tens of rupees, as in 1895. Over-production between 1890 and 1900 may be a cause of this stalemate. Not only had acreage under tea doubled in the last fifteen years of the 19th century, but production per acre had increased. India was exporting rice and wheat on a very large scale, amounting to. £ 18,114,178 in 1905. Export of hides almost doubled. The largest fall was registered in indigo. One of the major channels of remittance in the nineteenth century, indigo had been dealt a fatal blow by the synthetic dye, discovered in Germany in 1897. Its export had fallen to £ 390,918 in 1905. Opium had been stationary for a long time. The spacious days of the East India Company, when indigo and opium were kings, were irretrievably gone. But the day of manufacture had not yet arrived. Barring jute manufacture, India's export trade still chiefly consisted of raw materials—cotton, jute, tea, rice, wheat, seeds and hides.

1.

Year	Annual average of merchandise imports from U.K. S.R. = Sicca Rupee	Annual average of merchandise exports to U. K. S R.
1796-98	12,50,851	58,86,224
1799-1801	36,44,203	94,83,802

Bengal Commercial Reports, 1796-97 to 1801-02.

2.

Year	Percentage of imports from U.K. to total imports Bengal	Percentage of exports to U.K. to total exports from Bengal
1812	$23\frac{4}{13}\%$	$23\frac{1}{13}\%$

Bengal Commercial Reports, 1812-13.

3. Kennedy's evidence before the House of Commons, 1831.
4. Charles Trevelyan, *A Report upon the Inland Customs and Town Duties of the Bengal Presidency*, Second edn p. 6.
4a S.R. stands for Sicca Rupee = 2s. 6d
5. Court to G.G. in C. (Comml. Sep), 2 June, 1812

6.

Year	Actual excess of exports (on the Company's as well as private accounts). S. R
1814	2,99,66,777
1815	3,22,13,566
1816	1,15,61,745
1817	1,96,19,818

See tables, A. Tripathi, *Trade and Finance in the Bengal Presidency*, 1793-1833, p. 151, fn 1, p. 152 and p. 166.

7.

Year	Private import of merchandise from U.K. S. R.
1814	40,90,165
1818	1,59,44,495

Ibid. p. 167.

8.

Year	The Company's exports to U.K. in remittance trade S. R.
1814	59,81,793
1817	55,49,604
1816	56,08,974
1817	93,28,438
1818	69,99,443

See tables, ibid., pp. 158, 167.

9. Private import of treasure into Calcutta

Year	S. R.
1814	1,11,84,285
1816	3,25,82,140
1818	4,75,14,948

Bengal Commercial Reports, 1814-15 to 1818-91.

10. Private remittable capital of Bengal, alone, amounted to 156 lakhs per year. See A. Tripathi, op. cit., fn. 3, p. 169.
11. A.D. Gayer, W. W. Rostow, & A. J. Schwartz, *The Growth and Fluctuation of the British Economy*, 1790-1850, vol. I, p. 149.
12. A. Tripathi, op. cit., p. 181, continuation of fn. 8 of p. 180.
13.

Yr.	Private trade with U.K.				Company's trade with U.K.	
	Import		Export		Import	Export
	merch S.R.	treasure S.R.	merch S.R.	treasure S.R.	merch S.R.	merch S.R.
1825-26	1,24,93,958	1,56,978	1,71,81,915	48	8,74,648	1,26,78,980
1826-27	1,26,26,147	20,180	99,61,591	...	2,82,201	1,47,88,540
1827-28	1,86,43,444	73,620	1,28,88,130	7,06,979	8,48,312	1,75,87,150 (+84,58,702 in treasure)
1828-29	2,17,62,877	2,48,101	1,16,40,299	12,41,448	3,98,880	1,41,26,165

Bengal Commercial Reports, 1825-26 to 1828-29.

14. A Tripathi, op. cit., fn. 1, p. 207.
15.

Yr.	Total merchandise export S.R.	Indigo export S.R.
1827-28	5,95,27,104	1,91,71,606
1828-29	5,02,81,959	1,21,92,642

Bengal Commercial Reports, op. cit.

16 Minutes of 30 May, 1829 and 8 December, 1829.
17 Trade with U.K.

Yr.	Private trade				Company's trade			
	Imports		Exports		Imports		Exports	
	merch S.R.	treasure S.R.	merch S.R.	treasure S.R.	merch S.R.	treasure S.R.	merch S.R.	treasure S.R.
1831-32	1,72,27,917	X	1,18,40,413	36,42,784	...	—	97,20,971	73,89,815
1832-33	1,41,87,376	X	1,27,55,288	51,68,684	38,210	—	98,88,155	19,46,972

Bengal Commercial Reports, 1831-32 and 1832-33

18. John Phipps, *History of Ship-buiding in Calcutta* (1840), pp. 126-7.
19. Comparative share of Bengal Trade (1832-33).

	British S.R.	Foreign S.R.
Imports ...	2,27,18,572	16,70,264
Exports ...	8,52,05,784	76,65,806

Bengal Commercial Reports, 1832-33

19a. Fort St. George Public Consult., 19 April, 1808, pp. 2919-20.
19b Fort St. George Revenue Consult., 7 March, 1822, pp. 115 ff.
19c. Fort St. George Revenue Consult. (Sea Customs), 27 February, 1826.
19d Ibid, 30 June, 1834, pp. 290 ff.
20. See Memorial to Lord John Russell, Proceedings, Manchester Chamber of Commerce, 24 September, 1846; Ibid., 14 February and 28 September, 1848.
21. Declaration of Debendranath Tagore, etc. re: Messrs. Carr, Tagore & Co. *Friend of India*, 20 January and 6 April, 1848.
22.

Yr.	Imports merch £	Imports treasure £	Yr.	Exports merch £	Exports treasure £
1856-57	14,194,587	14,418,697	1855-56	23,088,259	601,176
1865-66	29,599,228	26,557,801	1864-65	68,027,016	1,444,775

Statistical Abstracts

23. Taking 1854-56 as the base, Bombay's import trade increased by 158% and export trade by 198% during 1861-63 In the next three years the former rose by 218% and the latter by 308%. Evidence of W. Cassels, 20 November, 1868, before Bombay Bank Commission, 1868
24 R D Choksey, *Economic History of the Bombay, Deccan and Karnatak* 1818-68,
25.

Year	*Exports, Raw Cotton* £	*Percentage to total export to U.K.*
1860	5,637,624	34
1861	7,342,168	38
1862	10,203,470	51
1863	18,779,040	64
1864	35,864,795	73
1865	37,573,637	75

Statistical Abstracts

26 Report and evidence, Bombay Bank Commission, 1868 D E. Wacha, *A Financial Chapter in the History of Bombay* (1910) Also Report of the Deccan Riots Commission, 1875
27 L H Jenks, *The Migration of British Capital to 1875* (1927), p. 207.
28 See *Moral and Material Progress* (submitted before the House of Commons), 1872-73, p 75
29. Up to 30 April, 1865, the amount of capital raised actually for railways was £60,860,000 of which only £754,231 was Indian See Cambridge thesis by W J Macpherson, entitled *British Investment in Indian Guaranteed Railways. 1845-75* (not yet published)
30 Sterling and Rupee debt held in London in 1875 = £ 65½ millions, nominal capital invested in companies registered in U K between 1856-65 = £ 49 millions Ibid.
30a See pp 928 ff
31 See Memorandum by Mr Campbell, *Tea in Assam East India Products*, part I, and *Reports on Tea and Tobacco Industries in India, 1874*.
32 Edgar, "Note on the Tea Industry in Bengal", *Papers Regarding the Tea Industry in Bengal* (1873), pp 7-11.
33 Parliamentary Papers, 1831, vol V, p 498.
34 Buchanan, *Development of Capitalist Enterprise in India*
35 Parliamentary Papers, 1831-32, vol X, part II, pp 866-88
36 From *Statistical Abstracts*, published by the Government of India
37 In 1892 the number of jute mills in Bengal, falling under the Factories Act, were 37, that of jute presses, 34. Compared to approximately 4000 looms in 1877, there were 10,048 looms in 1895
38 See table IV, Second Report, Indian Central Jute Committee, p 38.
39. *Statistical Abstracts*,
40 Statement X, *Indian Jute Mills Association Report*.
41. Elgin Papers, MSS EUR D509/2 in C R O See above, p 804

CHAPTER XXXV.

INDUSTRY

1. *Introduction.*

Large scale industry, based on factory system, came to India as the by-product of the British rule. Attempts were made from time to time to introduce new manufactures and modern methods into a scene of traditional handicrafts and domestic production. Since, till 1860's, they had been made either by the East India Company or the private British merchants, both primarily traders, they had produced nothing but a commercial revolution in India. An Industrial Revolution might have been expected to follow in the next fifty or seventy years, but we find instead machines and machine-made goods being imported from Great Britain in ever increasing quantities, a handful of specialised industries being built, and indigenous manufactures being destroyed in that process.

The school of Indian historians like R. C. Dutt, influenced by Friedrich List (who badly wanted an Industrial Revolution in Germany), blamed the British government for stifling the possibilities of an Indian Industrial Revolution. It had favoured *laissez faire* when the going was good, turned to preference at the first breath of competition, and always sacrificed Indian industries at the altar of her own. The Marxist (like Baran) accounts for the slow and uneven tempo of growth by referring to the classic picture of a colonial economy under an alien capitalism. Others try to explain it by social and psychological drawbacks, which retard progress as much as adverse economic conditions, and lack of technological skill. Inertia of the village system, self-sufficient only in terms of the poorest standard of living,[1] specialised and static production for the dandy and the sophisticated, a rigid caste structure, which was reflected in an unadaptive mental process, preventing the merchant from turning to manufacture and the money-lender from becoming a capitalist, and the timid fatalism, which preferred short term speculation to long term enterprise, have been considered as responsible as fiscal discrimination against India or an unfair revenue policy which sapped the peasants' capacity to consume and ability to save but encouraged the idle rich to waste capital on unproductive ostentation.

Now the economic historian and the theoretical economist have raised their voices by those of the Protectionist, the Marxist and the Sociologist. A study of the Industrial Revolution in England, the

pioneer country, and an analysis of the conditions of growth in the under-developed countries throw much light on the problem. D.C. Coleman points out that the Industrial Revolution involves other changes besides the merely technical: "population growth, large scale and extensive industrial investment and the remarkably pervasive effects of the application of science to industry".[2] S. Pollard finds a single family likeness among all industrial revolutions: "... they are marked by the emergence of an engineering industry, to create and maintain the new equipment and the motors or engines needed by the first industries to be mechanised; this in turn depends on an iron (or steel) industry, a second typical feature; and together, they demand new sources of power, coal, oil or hydro-electric installations."[3] A universal need for heavy investment in improved means of transport like roads, canals, ships, docks and railways; housing, town development and public utilities; technical training and social adjustment; irrigation, drainage and mechanization of agriculture are also included in the Revolution. In the parlance of recent literature on economic growth, it is a "primary growth sector" calling into being "derived growth sectors".[4] "No major advance in any of these sectors is possible without parallel advances in the others", which involves a great pressure "to accumulate in real terms, the large resources required for simultaneous investment in different sectors".[5]

The lesser the previous accumulation of capital and the more backward and colonial the economic structure, the greater the need of capital over a wider front. A growing population creates a further difficulty by absorbing any increased investment.[*] A broader gap of technology or unprotected competition with the products of advanced countries worsen the situation and call for more exertions. Expropriation of the rich was unthinkable in the nineteenth century, and even if Professor Lewis' minimum investment for Industrial Revolution—12% of savings[6]—was any solution, it would have been unavailing, if invested in industries other than the basic ones. The few Indian industries, which were fortunate in gaining foreign capital, were all export-orientated, and even railways were built with commercial profit as the ultimate desideratum. Let alone other causes, backward agriculture, absence of government help and retarded emergence of an elite, dedicated to modernisation, would have ruled out the 'take off' stage of Professor Rostow.[7] As Indian enterprises were fitfully financed by British capital, which was busy developing Canada and U.S.A., and no technological discoveries could possibly be made to overcome its scarcity, they look so uneven and secondary.[8] The German solution of protection, or the French solution of mobilising the smallest savings through vast public

works, or the Russian solution of preferring capital to consumption goods was not available to a subject country which formed the largest market for her rulers. The only solution was import and balanced investment of British capital. Unfortunately, it was not forthcoming in quantities or on conditions desired, it was not amenable to control in the Indian interests, and when it came at all, it was invested in industries other than the basic ones.

2. *Indigo*

Manufacture of indigo comes first in the chronology of modern industries The East India Company's search for a substitute for Indian calicoes, whose import was vehemently opposed by British manufacturers since 1782, and application of private British capital (raised by the agency houses from savings of the Company's servants or profits of Asistic trade) combined soon to place this article on a firm footing Minden Wilson states that a Frenchman, Louis Bonnard, started the first indigo factory in Bengal, and another, Francois Grand, the first in Bihar, between 1782 and 1785,[9] but the Company's records put one Prinsep as the pioneer.[10] Financed by the Calcutta agents like Fergusson, Fairlie, David Scott, and Joseph Barretto, and helped by European demand, which turned to India when revolution broke out in the West Indies, the export of Bengal indigo rose by 1795 to nearly 3 million lb., worth about 62 lakhs of Sicca Rupees [11]

Over-speculation and adulteration brought about a crisis and private exports fell to 38 lakhs in 1801-02.[12] The industry would have fared much worse if the private trade interest in the Court of Directors, led by David Scott, did not prevail upon Wellesley to lend a hand. But the decline of Indian piece-goods trade, consequent on Manchester competition and the Continental System, left no other alternative to the Company.[13] The indigo manufacturers heaved a sigh of relief.[14] Plantations spread quickly over Bengal and Bihar,[15] and the cry of the oppressed peasantry began to be heard.[16] In 1815, Henry Lee, an American trader, was once more warning against the danger of over-production.[17]

Due to exigencies of trade between 1814 and 1820, private capital got stuck up in Bengal. With a widespread depression following the Napoleonic Wars, remittance through trade became hazardous. To make matters worse, more bullion was now being imported from England and still more of Lancashire cloth.[18] This caused a blind rush for investment in opium in the time of the Marquess of Hastings, and when that failed, indigo remained the sole source of private remittance (as silk had been monopolised by the Company). The debt policy of the Government made capital still cheaper. The inevitable

result was a thoughtless spree of indigo cultivation in 1824 and 1825,[19] which brought its own nemesis in 1826.

About two crores of rupees were being now annually invested in indigo, principally by the agency houses. In all 899 factories had been established in the Bengal Presidency, covering 30 to 40 lakh *bighas* of land.[20] To secure this capital from continuing crisis and constant litigation with the *ryots* and their own rivals in trade (some of them were native *Zamindars*), the Europeans demanded rights to own plantations and enforce contracts. Lord William Bentinck vigorously supported their claims,[21] and though the Court of Directors opposed them on humanitarian grounds and feared that colonization would result,[22] he allowed the planters to have their way. Rugulation V of 1830 protected them from wilful evasion of cultivation which indirectly sanctioned the use of force [23] The Court had these clauses rescinded but the Charter Act of 1833 gave the Europeans ownership of land and full freedom of contract.

A few planters acquired, by a long lease or purchase, *zamindari* rights, but the old and pernicious *ryoti* system continued as before.[24] Under the latter indigo was cultivated by the *ryots* on their own lands against a renewable contract with a planter based on an advance of usually two rupees a *bigha*. For wilful or forced inability to deliver the stipulated quantity of plant, the undelivered quantity formed the nucleus of a debt In north Bihar no debt was incurred if the *ryot* failed to supply on the ground of crop-failure, but he would also have to be content with a minimum return, however fine the crop might be. In U.P. the plants were supplied at a fixed price and the planter furnished seeds in certain areas. But indigo consumed everywhere the best lands and was never a paying crop to the *ryots* There being no economic inducement, the system could only be worked "by oppression and ill usage",[25] a view in which Sir Charles Wood, the Secretary of State, fully concurred.[26]

So troubles with the unwilling *ryots* multiplied after 1833, which flared up into wide-spread resistance in 1859 and open rebellion in 1860.[26a] Lord Canning was won over to the planters' cause and passed a regulation which gave criminal jurisdiction to magistrates in civil cases of breach of contract. Wood opposed it on principle and allowed the measures only because they were temporary.[27] He opposed Canning's Contract Bill[28] and condemned the partisanship of judges like Peacock and Wells in the *Nil-darpan* case.[29] The planters knew that their days in Bengal were over[30] and began to transfer their investments to Bihar, Banaras and the Doab. While production of Bengal indigo fell from 50,330 *maunds* in 1857 to 16,502 *maunds* in 1877, that of Bihar rose from 23,400 *maunds* to 34,857 *maunds*, and the Doab pro-

duced 44,285 *maunds* in place of a meagre 6,000. In another decade the Bihar production rose by another 24,000 *maunds* and the Doab by 20,000.[31]

But by the end of the nineteenth century (1897) the invention of synthetic dye dealt a death blow to this industry. Its export, valued at £3.5 millions in 1895, fell to £390,918 in 1905. Between 1904-5 and 1914-5 the area under indigo shrank to one-tenth of the area in 1894-5. It was meeting the determined resistance of the Bihar peasants which rose to a climax in Gandhi's Champaran campaign. Indigo manufacture died out in Northern India and sought to prolong a precarious existence in Madras. There were only 65 plantations in Bihar and Orissa in 1921, 56 being owned by the Europeans, the last of the stragglers.[32] Their baroque buildings stand today in ruins all over the country, the vanishing memory of the first British enterprise in India.[32a]

3. *Tea and Coffee*

What indigo lost, tea gained. When the Company's China monopoly was abolished in 1833 it turned its attention seriously to the possibilities of growing tea in India. Though Sir Joseph Banks reported discovery of wild tea plants as early as 1788, the credit for the first knowledge of the existence of tea plants in Assam should go to Robert Bruce, who was there in 1823. He informed his brother, Alexander, who again reported to his senior officer, Captain Jenkins, verbally in 1826 and officially in 1833.[33] Meanwhile, Lt. Andrew Charlton had independently come across the tea plant in Assam and informed Dr John Tytler of his discovery on 21 January, 1832, and Captain Jenkins on 17 May, 1834. He has been regarded as the pioneer in the official records, which honour really belongs to Robert Bruce.

Bentinck had the greatness to realize its importance at once, and proposed the formation of a Tea Committee in a minute of 24 January, 1834.[34] The Committee sent a scientific deputation under Dr. Wallich in 1835, of which Alexander Bruce became the guide. The first experiments were soon started with Chinese seeds, but the indigenous seeds did better.

The Company was willing to give up its project to a private organization for production on a commercial scale. For this the Assam Company was founded by London merchants on 12 February, 1839. Names of several East India agents were prominent in its Committee—William Crawford, G. G. de H. Larpent and Richard Twining. The original capital was £500,000, and Cockerill & Co. and Boyd & Co. were appointed joint agents of the Company in

Calcutta. It is interesting to note that Dwarkanath Tagore's Carr, Tagore & Co. formed the Bengal Tea Association for the same purpose.[35] The two companies amalgamated soon and the Assam Tea Company was incorporated as a rupee company in 1845 with a capital of 50 lakhs of Company's Rupees divided into 10,000 shares. In 1840 the Government transferred to it two-thirds of its establishments and lands, free of rent, for ten years with permission to settle on other lands.

The Asasam Company was the only one in the field till 1850, fighting an uphill task and proving true to its motto,—"*Ingenio et Labore*"—by ingenuity and hard work. To pay a dividend of 2½% it had to borrow in 1845, and it raised in that year a crop of 194,800 lb.[36] The tide turned in 1847—but slowly. The period between 1856-60 saw some profitable trading. The crop rose to 872,431 lb. and dividends to 12%. Though the acreage under tea was fast spreading, acute labour shortage, competitive cultivation of poppy and lack of communication stood in the way of progress. Two of its directors had defected and formed the rival Jorehat Tea Company in 1859, and many of its officers had been raising private gardens.

Hectic speculation in tea was a feature of the years between 1859 and 1865 when twenty companies were registered in London and Calcutta, besides many more unregistered private gardens. Rules were relaxed by the Government under which grants of lands should have been made.[37] By 1866-67 more than 6 million lb of tea were being manufactured in India.[38] This over-speculation was hit by the general depression of 1866-67 and stringency of the London and Calcutta money-markets. Inefficient and negligent administration added to the costs. Even the pioneer Assam Company incurred losses between 1865 and 1867 and could only declare a 6% dividend in 1869.[39]

As the rate of exchange between India and Britain fell below its par value since the 1870's, tea became more profitable. The Assam Company's dividends once rose to 35% between 1871 and 1880, and retained an average of 12% in the next decade and 13% in the decade after.

Tea was once again being over-produced in the last few years of the nineteenth century. Not only had the acreage under tea doubled during 1885-1904 but production per acre had increased.[40] Though its market price dropped after 1900, the cost of production was so cut as still to yield on average a profit of 8½% in the first decade of the present century. The completion of the Assam Bengal Railway and the opening of the Chittagong port were a boon to

the industry. In 1918 the export of tea reached the figure of 324 million lb. worth Rs. 17.7 crores, 21% above the pre-war average in quantum. In 1920 the acreage was 704,059 and output more than 345 million lb.[41] The dividends were rising.[42]

Though there had been always a great variety in the size of plantations, tea tended to become a large scale industry. Under the increasing control of European companies consolidation of smaller gardens was stimulated. Much more British capital was invested here than in indigo, especially during 1890-1910,[43] and the managing agency system had a near monopoly. There was a slight shift of control in Bengal from European to Indian hands.[44] A similar trend, though less pronounced, was seen in the Assam plantations.

The first coffee plantation had been established at Fort Gloster in Bengal in 1823 and ownerhip was granted to the Europeans under certain conditions to facilitate its growth. Since Bengal produced poor crops, coffee cultivation migrated to the highlands of South India.[45] A coffee boom ensued in the 1860's. While £188,532 worth of coffee was exported in 1859, £801,908 worth was exported in 1864 and £1,633,032 worth in 1879.[46] The outbreak of the 'borer' disease and competition with Brazilian coffee, acutest between 1877 and 1887, caused a set-back to production which fell from 34 million lb. in 1885 to an average of 20 million lb. during the last years of the century. The average acreage under coffee,—237,500 in 1885,—came down to 133,000 in 1895 and 88,000 in 1914.[47]

4. *Jute Industry*

British capital, employed in indigo, was seldom imported. It was raised from the savings of the Company's servants and the fruits of Asiatic trade. Some capital was imported to finance tea and coffee plantations. It was jute manufacture, however, which mainly fed on imported capital and still remains a near British monopoly.

Development of jute manufacture in India has often been called a romance. The first sample of Bengal jute was sent to London in 1791.[48] Though the Company's experiment in this trade between 1793 and 1797 failed for weakness of fibre,[49] hand-woven jute goods, like gunnies, found a ready market in U.S.A., Penang and Singapore.[50] The trade continued to prosper between 1833 and 1856 when jute goods worth Company's Rupees 41,20,881 were exported.[51] Demand for raw jute had also increased in this period.

Entrepreneurs naturally wanted to set up jute mills in India on the model of Dundee, where jute industry had been started in 1838, to avoid the cost of transport. The Crimean War, by stopping import of Russian hemp, encouraged their projects. The first jute

spinning mill was erected at Rishra (Bengal) in 1855 by one George Ackland, lately of the East India Marine Service, with the financial help of a Bengalee, Bisvambhar Sen. The first power-driven looms began to work at Baranagar in 1859. The former produced at first 8 tons per day and the latter produced only 152.[52] The Calcutta Agency House of George Henderson & Co. financed the Borneo Jute Co., which had set up the Baranagar Weaving Mill. Three more—the Gouripore (1862), the Serajgunge (1862) and the India (1866)—came in the sixties.[53] The Baranagar Mill doubled its capacity in five years and within thirteen cleared its capital twice over.[54] All except Ackland's mill "simply coined money".[55]

A jute boom ensued in the seventies. Five new companies were floated between 1872-74 and eight more between 1874-78, swelling the total loomage to 3,500. The Bengal industry shut out Dundee to a great extent "from the Asiatic and Australian markets, and even from a part of the American market".[56] This feverish speculation, however, noted also in tea industry, brought about a depression, as a result of which control of most of the mills went to Bird & Co., Andrew Yule & Co., and Mackinon, Mackenzie & Co. Only one mill was added in 1876.

A second jute boom came along between 1882-85 when five new mills were started and the total number of looms doubled that of 1875.[57] To regulate output, the Indian Jute Mills Association was founded in 1884. After a few lean years, when the mills had to work a shorter time and sell at fixed rates, a marked advance in hessian manufacture took place. About 10,000 looms were working in 1895, one-third of which produced hessian goods, and the number of spindles passed two hundred thousand.[58] About 5.47 crores of Rupees had been invested (by 1895) by the Europeans in the jute industry; the export of jute products was valued at £ 4.7 millions, a 400% rise over that of 1870's.[59] Dividends were good The Budge Budge Mill paid in that year 19%, the Fort Gloster 20%, and the Gouripore 16%.[60] This naturally provoked the wrath of Dundee[61] and the Secretary of State had to institute an inquiry on the jute manufacture of Bengal, especially, the charge of labour sweating

The expansion of jute industry differed from the equally phenomenal growth of cotton textiles industry in one important point It took the form of extension of the existing concerns rather than a corresponding increase in the number of mills. This tendency became less conspicuous between 1895 and 1913. After a temporary set-back, caused by famines in the late 90's, the industry prospered for several reasons—fall of the exchange value of the rupee, expansion of railways and rise of world demand resulting from exploitation of

American and Australian grain lands. Even German and American import duties could not affect the pace of growth. Bengal's monopoly of raw jute was fully exploited and British capital, if not abundant, was always adequate for this predominantly British industry. On the eve of the World War I the number of mills was 64, of looms, about 36,000 (21,000 for hessian), and of spindles, about 7½ lakhs.[62]

5. *Cotton Manufacture*

Jute and cotton industries, organized on factory basis, were contemporary, but while the British have monopolised the former, the Indians have come to make the latter their own From time immemorial India had developed cotton manufacture into a great art. It had once found ready vent in Egypt and Imperial Rome, and was no less avidly sought by the Arabs till the sixteenth and the Europeans till the eighteenth century. Spinning and weaving had become a national occupation, peculiarly suited to the tenor of Indian village life, and the products satisfied both the cottage and the court and served local as well as foreign needs. Dacca was famous for its muslins, Murshidabad for its *choppahs,* Lakhnau for its chintzes, Ahmedabad for its *dhoties* and *dopattas,* C.P. for its silk-bordered cloth, and Madras tor its *palampore.* The Indian industry offered a feast of colours and a variety of textures, unequalled till the present day.

It lent itself easily to the domestic system of production and was organized under craft guilds,[63] the individual craftsmen working at home on capital supplied by merchants. The relations between the *dadni* merchants (i.e. who advanced capital) and the weavers are not well known, but the former's increasing control may be assumed. The industry retained its domestic character when the East India Company took over, but the *dadni* merchants were replaced by the agency system (the process began in 1753) to the injury of the producers. The Resident, the factors and the native servants of the Company's *aurungs* now lorded it over the looms and defrauded the weavers of their deserts.[64]

In spite of the sumptuary laws of the 18th century and the high tariffs protecting British woollens and linens from Indian printed and painted calicoes, the Company's Bengal piece-goods investment in 1793 was about 67½ lakhs of current Rupees[65] and remained at that level for some years. But Lancashire was fast catching up. In 1787 it had surpassed Indian manufacture except in the finest muslins.[66] Technical progress soon enabled it to produce comparable yarns at a cheaper rate. The protective duties were further enhanced.[67] Two other factors went against the finer textiles—the

disappearance of native courts, which had kept up a steady demand for them, and the elimination of the French and the Dutch competition during the Revolutionary and the Napoleonic Wars.[68] American traders offered some fillip to this dying craft till 1813.[69] By then machinery had beaten it completely.[70] Muslins were the chief victim, but other sorts were seriously affected The Company's indent in 1812 was less than a third of that in 1803-4.[71] The ruin of the premier industry of India was announced in the speedy decline of exports from Dacca.[72] The East India Company's order on its Dacca factory amounted to 3 lakhs of Sicca Rupees in 1801 It fell to a little over one lakh in 1812 and the factory was finally closed in 1818.[73]

The change in the taste of the urban middle class and extreme cheapness of coarse Manchester cottons, which suited the poorer classes, contributed soon to the loss of the domestic market. From a paltry beginning worth £156 in 1796, the export of British piece-goods to countries east of the Cape (mainly India) had risen to £3 2 millions in 1818.[74] Aided by a liberal tariff of only 2½%, they were now selling at a profit.[75] Bishop Heber found them preferred by Dacca people to their own local manufacture.[76] Elphinstone witnessed the same process in Bombay[77] and the story of the Madras region was not much different. In the earliest statistics of trade obtainable for Madras we find her plying a brisk trade in piece-goods with London and U.S.A.[78] In 1824-5 we find private export to U.K. still amounting to 25 lakhs of Madras Rupees But competition with British manufacture had already become keen in Malacca and South-East Asian markets.[79] The situation deteriorated further till her exports fell to about 13 lakhs in 1832, while import of British cottons rose to 4½ lakhs.[80]

From 1824 machine-spun twist and yarn began to arrive. In four years the value of such imports into Calcutta rose from less than a lakh of Sicca Rupees to 33 lakhs.[81] The British yarn was being spun at less than half the cost of the Indian yarn[82] and the spinners fared inevitably the same fate as the weavers. The Manchester Chamber of Commerce was so eager to dump goods in India during the depression of 1830's that it broke down the Company's China monopoly and the Indian remittance trade in 1833. A sad note creeps into Bentinck's minute of 30 May, 1829, which may justly be called an elegy on Indian Cotton Industry: "Cotton piece-goods, for so many ages the staple manufacture of India, seem thus for ever lost. . . ."

Much has been made of the destruction of the hand-loom cotton manufacture of India, and people of all classes have joined in the requiem.[82a] But when we learn from the economic history of England

that a similar ruin was overtaking the British handloom industry, we realize the causes of its inevitable ruin. Handloom industry might have been, and actually was, preserved as a museum piece, but never as a competing enterprise. The tariff policy of Britain was unjust, and partly accounts for the ruin of cotton industry in India. More important factors involved were the technological and organizational superiority. Nothing short of mechanisation could have averted the disaster, which, indeed, was understood by the Indian capitalists who launched the modern cotton industry in the 1860's.

Bombay and Ahmedabad became its first homes. The Bombay Spinning and Weaving Mill was established by Cowasjee Nanabhoy in 1853. It started work in 1854 with 25,000 spindles. The Broach Spinning and Weaving Mill with 10,000 spindles began to produce in 1855. Proximity to the vast cotton tracts of the Deccan, availability of capital, the Parsee tradition of daring entrepreneurship, experience gined in the hereditary cotton trade with China and Africa, and duties that came to be levied on British manufacture after the Mutiny, combined to spell success for the industry. By 1861 we find that 13 mills had been erected (10 in Bombay and 3 in Ahmedabad), 7 of which were in actual operation. Dinshaw Maneckjee Petit was planning bigger things with 60,000 spindles. The paid up capital was still low, reaching 5,000 Rupees in two cases only [83]

Though the American Civil War retarded its growth to a certain extent by raising the price of raw cotton, the spread of railways and the Government's tariff policy helped it. An impecunious Finance Member doubled the duties on British cotton [84] The relief was, however, temporary. as the duties on piece-goods were once again reduced to 5% and on yarn to 3½%. The abnormal cotton boom of 1860's led to the slump of 1870's and affected the mushroom growth of cotton industry. In 1872 we find only 18 mills working in the Bombay Presidency and two in Bengal.[85] But two booms occurred in the next fifteen years—one between 1875-77 and the other between 1885-90 In 1890 the number of mills had risen to 137, Bombay leading with 94. Many of these, however, were spinning mills. The industry was still concentrated on production of yarn for export to China. The little fine cloth it produced roused Manchester[86] and under the pressure of a General Election, the Secretary of State prevailed upon a willing Lord Lytton to lower duties on coarse British goods in spite of the adverse majority vote in the Governor-General's Council.[87]

In 1895 the value of yarn exported reached 6 8 million tens of Rupees, and that of cloth, 3.4 millions tens of Rupees. As Sir Henry James stated in the Commons, while in the six years ending in 1892

the U.K. held two-thirds of the trade with Hongkong, China and Japan, in the four years ending in 1895, four-fifths of this trade had passed to India. The cloth was not much consumed in India, and the years of famine and plague that followed (1895-1900) did not allow the home demand to increase. Three factors slackened the pace of growth—(1) price of raw cotton, which American speculation sent rocketing in 1902, (2) a countervailing 5% excise duty on Indian mill cloth levied in 1894 (reduced to 3½% in 1896),[88] and (3) a depression in the China market, aggravated by the silver basis of the Chinese currency. Though the rate of progress was maintained in looms, the number of spindles rose but slightly for some time after 1900.

6. *Steel and Coal.*

Heavy industries could not develop in India during the 19th century, not primarily because of capital shortage but because of (1) lack of high grade iron ore and (2) inadequate production of coal. In Bengal, Jessop and Co. tried to start iron works at Barakar in 1839, Mackay and Co. near Raniganj in 1855, and Bengal Iron Co., near Asansol, in 1875, which it sold later to the Government. All met with failure.[89] Major W. C. Lennan brought to the notice of the Madras government the fine quality of Salem steel in 1808,[90] but Andrew Duncan's factory came to nought.[91] J. M. Heath, a civil servant of the Company, was granted monopoly of iron production in Madras in 1825.[92] He erected iron works at Porto Novo in 1830 with some capital borrowed from Alexander & Co. of Calcutta. We find him claiming discovery of chloromate of iron in December, 1832, but still in need of funds.[93] His iron works failed, too, after struggling for thirty years.

In 1889 the Bengal Government sold its Asansol pig iron works to a new Bengal Iron and Steel Co., Ltd. for which Martin & Co. became the managing agents in 1894. Hampered by poor grade ore, it was producing only 40,000 to 50,000 tons of pig iron in 1907 and had dropped its steel project, though the Government had backed it from the beginning.[94]

Thus all the iron and steel needed for the Indian railways, textile mills, etc., almost every mechanical appliance used by the planter or the peasant, were imported from Britain in the nineteenth century. The pre-war average of such imports was 808,000 tons, worth about Rs. 12½ crores. This factor heavily weighed against industrialization and differentiated its character from that in Britain. While the Industrial Revolution in Britain was ushered in by the growth of iron and steel industries,[95] it began in India with application of steam to jute

and cotton textiles. The latter lacked Britain's solid basis of domestic production of iron and steel, and even the ancillary engineering industries (like the Jessops' workshop) were dependent on foreign trade for development.

England's great advantage was her magnificent fuel resource. Pig iron production got off to a fine start when Abraham Darby substituted coke for charcoal to smelt iron ore. This drew furnaces and foundries to the coal fields and enabled producers to replace wrought by cast iron and make steel by a special process. India suffered long for lack of adequate production of high grade coal. Seams of coal had been discovered in Bengal early in the nineteenth century and Alexander & Co. had started mining since 1820's.[96] But there was only one mine at work till 1840, and only three operated in 1854. The commencement of the East Indian Railway gave an impetus to the industry, not only by easing the means of transport but by creating a regular demand for coal itself. By 1879-80 Raniganj and Jharia could show 56 mines producing about a million tons a year. In 1870 the Mohpani deposits in C.P. were opened, in 1874 the Warora fields. These were negligible, and Bengal, with an average production of 467,000 tons between 1869-75, could not supply even the needs of the railways. India was importing about 600,000 tons of coal a year in 1880.[97] Little mechanisation had been introduced in the existing mines.

The nineties, however, saw a spectacular rise in coal output. The annual average shot up to more than 4½ million tons between 1896-1900. It came from deeper exploitation of Bengal deposits rather than discovery of new fields, and was called forth by increasing demand of jute and cotton industries and, of course, railways.[98] It was also helped by liberal conditions of mining leases and licences —60 licences being granted in 1899 but 400 in 1907. This explains the rise of average production to about 12 milion tons between 1906-10.[99]

7. *Paper.*

Production of machine-made paper dates from 1870 when the Bally Mills were established in Bengal. The Titaghur Paper Mill followed in 1882, the Bengal Paper Mill Co., in 1891 and the Imperial Mill in 1892-94. No other concern was floated in Bengal till 1918, but the industry was taking root in Lakhnau (1879) and Poona (1887). It was working under difficulties like the high cost of chemicals, heavy transport charges of coal, and severe competition from Europe, U.S.A. and Japan.

8. *The Tanning Industry.*

The modern tanning industry started late, though there was no dearth of hides and skins in India. It owed its origin to one Charles De Susa of Madras who, about 1845, introduced certain improvements in tanning methods.[100] The small capitalist-cum-export trader ran the business which became very profitable around 1880's with increasing demand from Germany. Military authorities were responsible for introducing the industry in Northern India as adjuncts to arsenals. A harness and saddlery factory was set up at Kanpur under Government auspices in 1860. It was followed by the Government-aided private enterprise of Messrs Allen and Cooper. Soon Bombay became the third major seat of this industry.[101] The Madras Government did valuable research work during 1904-11 to establish chrome-tanning when discovery of the chrome process in U S.A. seriously affected the vegetable and bark-tanned Madras hides.

9. *Conclusion.*

This survey would be incomplete without a reference to the managing agency system responsible for the pioneering and promoting of industrial development in India. It grew on the ruins of the agency houses, which financed the earliest British capitalist enterprise,[102] and inherited many of their characteristics. The first managing agents, too, gathered experience in general trade and were not technical experts. Each line of business opened the way for another, and the market for the products of one was found in the other. The range of their business ran from steam transport to tea, from jute manufacture to colliery.[103] They could supply capital directly or indirectly in a notoriously shy money-market as the old agency houses had once done (say, in indigo business), but they could, unlike their predecessors, also offer the requisite managerial efficiency. Like them they were connected with corresponding firms in Britain, and though sometimes technically separate, were run by the same partnership.

They started either as family concerns like the Tatas or Currimbhai Ebrahim & Sons., later converted into private limited partnerships, or, more often, directly as partnership, like Martin & Co Partnership agency firms predominate in Bombay and Calcutta, while family concerns do so in Ahmedabad. A few, however, are public limited companies like Binny & Co of Madras, but some, though outwardly joint stock concerns, are more akin to partnerships as the managing agents appoint their own friends to the Boards of Directors.[104]

The system came in later for a good deal of criticism and was charged with retarding an Industrial Revolution in India by confining itself to export-orientated manufacture,[105] but the evidence before the Indian Tariff Board proves that, in spite of many shortcomings, it has been on the whole inexpensive and efficient. As one leading authority asserts, "but for the managing agency system the pace of industrial development in India would have been slower, and the opportunities of British capital and British enterprise to function in India would have been limited."[106] It was due to their efforts that between 1895-1918 the number of Joint Stock Companies at work in India rose from 1309, with an authorized capital of more than 416 million Rupees and a paid up capital of more than 291 million Rupees, to 2,789, with an authorized capital of more than 2½ billion Rupees and a paid up capital of more than 1 billion Rupees.[107] The amount of British capital engaged in India is very dfficult to estimate. Sir George Paish puts it (Ceylon included) at £ 365,399,000 in 1909-10, while H. F. Howard puts India's share alone at £ 450,000,000. This would give some idea of the great role played by foreign capital in developing Indian industry.

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1 Compare Moreland, *India at the Death of Akbar*, p 279, and *Report of Indian Industrial Commission*, Parliamentary Paper--Command 51 of 1919, pp 11.151

2 D C Coleman, 'Industrial Growth and Industrial Revolutions', *Economica*, New Series, XXIII (1956), pp 1-22

3 S Pollard, 'Investment, Consumption and the Industrial Revolution', *The Economic History Review*, second series, Vol XI, No 2 (1958), p. 217

4 W W Rostow, 'Trends in Allocation of Resources in Secular Growth,' *Economic Progress* R Nurkse, *Problems of Capital Formation* K Mandelbaum, *The Industrialization of Backward Areas* Papers of the first International Conference of Economic History Stockholm, 1960

5 S. Pollard, op cit

5a Transitional stage in a traditional society required "a rise in the rate of investment to a level which regularly substantially, and perceptibly outstrips population growth" W W. Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth* (Camridge, 1960) p 21

6 W. A. Lewis, *Theory of Economic Growth*

7 A K. Cairncross, Essays in Bibliography and Criticism XLV, The *Economic History Review*, 2nd Series, Vol XIII, No 3, 1961

8 Economists like Ranade and Kale were satisfied with this progress and wanted more, while some others considered patriotic fervour for industrialization to be miguided See Ranade, *Essays* (3rd Edn) pp 97-98 and Kale, *Indian Industrial and Economic Problems* (2nd edn.) pp. 88 ff, for the former view, and J. M. Keynes, review of Theodore Morison's 'Economic Transition in India, *Economic Journal*, 1911, pp. 427 ff., for the latter. Keynes wrongly assumed that industrialization would be at the cost of agriculture and could not foresee the fall of raw material prices between 1913-22 and, once again, from 1928.

9 Minden Wilson, *History of Bihar*, pp 69-72.

10 A Tripathi, *Trade and Finance in the Bengal Presidency*, 1793-1833, pp. 41-42

11 G G. in C. to Court (Comml.), 27 July, 1796.

12 Bengal Commercial Reports, 1801-02

13 Court to G.G. in C. (Comml.), 30 June, 1809.

14. John Palmer to H. Trail, 29 Sept. 1809. Palmer Papers, Bodleian Library, Oxford, Vol. 68, p. 97.

15 For Bengal see W. W. Hunter, *Bengal MS Records*, Vols. I-III; for Bihar see Buchman Hamilton's Reports on Sahabad. Purnea and Bhagalpur.

16. Europeans in India 1766-1824, (MSS. No. 25, Commonwealth Relation Office), Buchanan Hamilton, Dinajpur, Eur. MSS. D71, Bk. V, p. 159 and Rangpur, Eur. MSS. D75, Vol. 2, Bk. IV, p. 55. Also see above, pp. 916-7.
17 H. Lee to F. Lee, 8 May, 1815. K. W. Porter. *The Jacksons and the Lees, 1766-1844*, Vol. 2, p. 1135.
18. Bengal Commercial Reports, 1821-2 and 1822-3.
19. John Palmer to H. Trail, 1 Dec., 1826. Palmer Papers, op. cit. Vol. 104, pp. 254-5.
20. Return to the Judicial Dept., 1 June, 1830. App. V, *Report of the Select Committee on Affairs of EI Co.*, House of Commons, 1832, Nos. 60 and 73.
21. Minutes of 30 May, 1829 and 14 May, 1830. See Financial Letters and Enclosures Received, 1829-30, Vol. 23, pp. 590-610. Great Indians like Dwarka Nath Togore and Rammohan Roy supported him. See the former's letter in the *Sambād Kaumudi*, 26 February, 1828, and the latter's in *Samāchār Darpan*, 19 Dec., 1829
22 General Appendix to *Report of the Select Committee on Affairs of E.I. Co.*, House of Commons, 1832, pp 288-306, 334-40.
23. A. Tripathi, op. cit., p. 233.
24. *Indigo Commission's Report*, pp. VIII, ff
25 Ibid, p XXVIII
26 Wood to Canning, 3 May 1860. Wood Papers, C R.O.
26a. See above, pp. 926 ff.
27. Wood to Wilson, 10 May, 1860, and Wood to Canning, 10 May, 1860, ibid.
28 Wood to Canning, 24 April, 1861, ibid
29 Wood to Canning, 14 Sept. 1861 and 10 January, 1862, ibid See above p. 933
30. Lt. Governor Grant calculated a loss of Rs 20/- per acre in Deltaic Bengal.
31 Reid, *Indigo*, p 85
32. *Census of India*, 1921, Vol 1, Part II, p 277.
32a. There is a good deal of similarity with the sugar plantations of the West Indies. See Richard Pares, Chichele Lectures, Supplement no. 4, *Economic History Review* and K.G. Davies, Essays in Bibliography and Criticism, XLIV, Ibid, 2nd Series, *Vol* XIII, *no.* 1, 1960.
33 H. A Antrobus, *A History of the Assam Tea Company* 1839-1953, p 17.
34 The Tea Committee included two Indians—Radhakanta Deb and Ramcomal Sen
35 It included five Indians—Dwarkanath Tagore, Prasonno Kumar Tagore, Rustomjee Cowasjee, Matilal Sil, and Hadjee Ispahani
36. Antrobus, op cit., pp. 62-63.
37 Edgar, *Note on the Tea Industry in Bengal*; Papers regarding the Tea Industry in Bengal, 1873. pp. 7-11 Also Memorandum by Mr Campbell, ibid, pp. 125-28.
38. *Reports on Tea and Tobacco Industries in India, 1874.* Part I, Tea in Assam, East India Products
39. *History of Jorehat Tea Company*, p. 67 and Abtrobus, op cit
40.

Yr.	*acreage.*	*production*
1885-90	310,595	201,389,000 lb.
1900-04	524,720	

41. *Indian Tea Statistics*, 1921, pp 10-11.
42.

Company.	*Years.*	*Dividend.*
Assam Tea Co.	1917-26	22%
Jorehat Tea Co.	-do-	30%

See Buchanan, *The Development of Capitalist Enterprise in India*, p. 69
43. Ibid.
44 *Satistical Abstracts.*
45. Buchanan, op. cit., p. 71.
46. *Statistical Abstracts.*
47 Ibid.
48. Bengal Board of Trade to G.G. in C., 11 March, 1791.
49. Proceedings of Bengal Board of Trade, 7 March, 1797.
50. Parl. Papers. 1831-32., Vol. X, part II, pp. 866-68.
51. Bengal Commercial Reports, 1856-57. Here Gadgil is wong. See Gadgil, *The Industrial Evolution of India*, p 54.
52. D. R. Wallace, *The Romance of Jute* (Second edn), p. 16.
53. Indian Central Jute Committee, Second Report.

54. Wallace, op. cit., p. 17.
55. Ibid, p. 29.
56 J. E O'connor's Memorandum, *Account of the Trade and Navigation of British India*, 1875-76, p. 31.
57 Buchanan, op. cit., p. 245.
58. Wallace, op. cit., p. 64.
59 Table IV, *Second Report*, Indian Central Jute Committee, p. 38.
60. Buchanan, op. cit., p. 252.
61. Gadgil, op cit, p. 103.
62 Ibid.
63. Birdwood, *Industrial Arts of India*, Vol I, p 139.
64. N. K Sinha, *Economic History of Bengal*, Vol. I, pp. 156. et. seq.
65 Proceedings of Bengal Board of Trade, 7 July, 1793.
66 Minute of Board of Trade, 26 February, 1787, B T V, Vol. IV, p. 198. Public Record Office, U K
67.

Variety	*Yr.*	*Duty.*
White Calicoes	1787	5s-3d + £ 18 10s. % *ad valorem*
	1802	6s-8d + £ 27. 1s. 1d. %*ad valorem*
Muslins	1787	5s-3d + £ 18 % *ad valorem*
	1802	6s-8d + £ 30-15s-9d % *ad valorem*

68 Sinha, op. cit, Chapts III and IV.
69. A Tripathi, op. cit., pp. 138-9.
70 Kennedy's evidence before House of Commons, 1831
71 Court to G G in C (Comml. Sep), 2 June, 1812
72 Home Miscellaneous 456 F, v. 113 See above p. 414
73 A Tripathi, op cit, p 134.
74 Gayer, Rostow and Schwartz, *The Growth and Fluctuation of the British Economy*, 1790-1850, p. 149. See above, pp. 413-6
75 Phipps, *A Guide to the Commerce of Bengal*, p. 263
76 Bishop Heber, *Narrative of a Journey*, p 185.
77. *East India Papers*, 1830, pp. 175-70 See also evidence of James Ritchcie, Minutes of Evidence on the Affairs of E I Co., 1831., pp 68, 80-81 and R D. Choksey, *Economic History of Bombay Deccan and Karnatak*, 1818-68.
78 Public Consultations (Madras), 13 August 1802 12 April, 1803.
79 Revenue Consultations, Sea Customs (Madras), 27 Feb 1826
80 Ibid, 30 June, 1834. Bengal imported British piece-goods worth S.R 72 lakhs in 1828-29 See Bengal Commercial Reports, 1828-29
81 A Tripathi, op cit, f n 1, p 204 and p 231.
82 Ibid, f n 1, p. 165.
82a This is very natural, as, unlike England, the ruin of the old hand-loom weavers was not accompanied by the growth of the machine industry in India. (Ed.).
83 Information enclosed in MSS. letter of Bartle Frene to Lord Elgin, 1 July, 1862. Elgin Papers, C R O.
84 Proceedings of Manchester Chamber of Commerce, 19 March, 1860 and 22 May, 1860. (MSS).
85. *East India Reports* House of Commons, 27 February, 1871, p 82
86. Jacob Bright's speech in H. C., Hansard, Third Series, Vol. 235. See above, pp. 798 ff.
87. Cranbrook to Lytton, 4, 5 & 23 February, 1879. Lytton Papers, Vol. IV, C R O. See above, p. 802
88. *Annual Report*, Manchester Chamber of Commerce, 1896, p. 1. See above, p. 804
89 Buchanan, op cit., p 280.
90 Public Consultations (Madras), 2 March, 1808, 14 April, 1809.
91. *Parl. Papers, Affairs of E.I. Co.*, 1831, V, p. 129.
92 Munro's Minute of 30 December, 1824, and Madras Govt to Court (Public), 21 January, 1825.
93. J. M. Heath's memorandum to Sir Frederic Adam. Public Consultations (Madras), 23 Januay, 1833.
94 Watson, *Iron and Steel in Bengal*, and Lovat Fraser, *Iron and Steel in India*, pp. 11 et seq.
95 Ashton, *Industrial Revolution, and Economic History of England in the Eighteenth Century*.
96. *Parl. Papers, Affairs of the East India Co.*, 1831, V, p. 19. This coal mine

came to the hands of Dwarkanath Tagore and has been since 1843 owned by the Bengal Coal Company.

97. Up to 1895 foreign import of coal maintained the same level. Then it began to fall.
98. Sir T Holland, *A Sketch of the Mineral Resources of India*, 1908.
99. Indian Coal Statistics, 1927, p 29.
100. A. Chatterton, *Tanning and Working in Leather in the Madras Presidency* (1904)
101. A. Guthrie, *The Leather Industry in Bombay* (1910)
102. Tripathi, op cit, chap. V.
103. Andrew Yule & Co., managed 10 jute, 18 tea, 14 coal, 3 transport, 1 sugar and 8 other companies. See Lokanathan, *Industrial Organization in India*, p. 48
104. Ibid., pp 16-28, 41-49. *Indian Central Banking Enquiry Committee, Majority Report* (1931), p 643
105. This conformed to the traditional pattern of foreign investment in economically backward countries, viz. the American colonies in the 18th century It does not reflect any sinister conspiracy but reflects the poverty of local consumers and expanding markets for primary products of the colonial countries in the great industrial centres of the world See Nurkse, *Some Aspects of Capital Accumulation in Under-developed Countries* (1952), pp. 12-14.
106. Lokanathan, op. cit., p 21. G. W Tyson, *Bengal Chamber of Commerce and Industry 1853-1953, A Centenary Survey*, pp. 98-100.
107. P. Pillai, *Economic Conditions in India*, p. 304.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

BANKING, CURRENCY AND EXCHANGE

I. CURRENCY AND EXCHANGE.

Under the Mughul Government the gold *mohur* and the silver *rupya*, without any fixed ratio of exchange between them, were current as legal tenders. In 1542 Sher Shāh had fixed the rupee's weight at 100 *ratis* or about 175 grains of fine silver, and the Mughuls accepted it as the standard weight for both gold and silver coinage. With the disruption of the Empire after 1707 the succession States claimed and exercised an undefined political sovereignty, and began to debase currency without altering the deominations, so that there soon ceased to be an Imperial legal tender current throughout India.

In Bengal, farming of mints, adopted by Ratan Chand, Diwan of Farrukh-siyar, led to the decline in value of the *sicca* rupee every year till, at the end of the third, it became a 'sonaut' Under the Jagat Seths the undervaluation of all *siccas* of an earlier date than the current year became established, so that they could earn huge *batta* or discount on them. The *siccas*, however, were not the only rupees extant. The East India Company found a currency confusion in Calcutta which was worse confounded in the mofussil districts.

It was not till 1763 that the Company could wrest from a pliant Mir Jafar the undisputed right to coin their own *siccas* at Calcutta.[1] Meanwhile, scarcity of silver had become notorious. Not only no bullion had been imported since 1757, but a drainage of silver had started towards China, Madras and Bombay.[1a] Bi-metallism was introduced in 1766 to meet this problem and was further confirmed in 1769. But the ratio between the gold *mohur* and the *sicca* was inadvertently fixed, first at 1 : 14 and then at 1 : 16. Overvaluing of gold immediately resulted in '*batta*' or discount on gold *mohurs* and made silver more scarce.[1b]

To secure uniformity of *sicca* coinage and prevent clipping by the money-changers, the rupee was provided in 1778 with an inscription—'19 san (i.e. the 19th year of Shah Alam) *sikkah*'—and given a fine silver content of 175.927 grains troy. But this arrangement of Hastings—one mint at Calcutta and use of one regnal year—added to confusion which was duly exploited by the mofussil shroffs.[1c] He suspended gold coinage altogether in 1777 for reasons discussed

above, but financial circumstances once again forced him to revert to gold in 1780 with the same results. Cornwallis' Committee on Currency diagnosed the disease—while the market ratio between gold and silver coins had been 1 : 12 or 1 : 13, the mint ratio had been fixed at 1 : 16.[1d] The Third Mysore War did not allow him, however, to continue with mono-metallism and in 1793 the gold *mohur* reappeared, valued at 16 *sicca* rupees.[1e] This experiment, almost a counsel of despair under the prevailing monetary stringency and the exigency of war-finance, was bound to fail like the two earlier ones and for the same cause—overvaluation of gold.[2]

In Madras, too, bi-metallism was meeting with similar difficulties. The first attempt was made there in 1749 when 250 Arcot rupees (each containing 166.477 grains of fine silver) were legally rated at 100 star pagodas (each containing 42.048 grains of gold), which were the traditional currency in that region. Compared to the market ratio the star pagoda had been undervalued,[3] and, after a few years of close proximity in the 1770's, the legal and the market ratios once again swung apart when the Third Mysore War began to cause heavy import of silver from Bengal. It had been a mistake to fix the ratio at 365 to 100 in 1790, but it was aggravated in 1797 by raising the ratio still further to 350 : 100. Bi-metallism on wrong lines ended in failure and caused disappearance of the pagodas.[4] In Bombay the *mohur* was at first overvalued,[5] but the change in 1774 brought it down almost to the market ratio. The introduction of debased Surat rupees at par, however, frustrated the designs of the Government and drove out Bombay rupees as also the gold *mohurs*. It was resolved to alter the standard of the *mohur* to that of the Surat rupee so as to give a ratio of 1 to 14.9, but the market ratio, inclined towards 1 to 15.5, caused the failure of the experiment.

In the light of this sad experience of bi-metallism in all the three Presidencies, and under the influence of Lord Liverpool, the Court of Directors decided for a silver standard in 1806, the rupee having a gross weight of 180 grains troy (pure silver content being 165 grains).[6] The principal object was fixity of value. The Court believed that they were restoring the old Mughul Unit, which could also become a unit of weights and measures and be easily assimilated to the English Unit. The proposed standard of fineness agreed so closely with Bombay, Madras and Furrukabad rupees that a uniformity could be obtained without much dislocation.

The Court's order was first carried out in Madras in 1818, when the Arcot rupee and the star pagoda were replaced by a silver rupee and a gold rupee of the weight and fineness decided by the Court.[7]

Bombay followed in 1824.[8] Bengal eliminated the Banaras rupee in 1819 and brought the Furrukabad rupee (current in Lakhnau region) in line with Bombay and Madras rupees in 1833.[9] With the exception of the Bengal *sicca* and gold *mohur*, a uniformity of coinage had been accomplished. The Bengal Government clung to the bi-metallic standard and Madras continued the system of double legal tender at a fixed ratio.

Rapid growth of internal and extenal trade, however, brought from the European merchants and agency houses a persistent demand for a common currency based on a single unit in place of a uniform curency composed of like independent units. Secondly, the surplus of one Presidency was not available for the deficiency of another without passing through the mint.[10] By the Act XVII of 1835 a common silver currency was introduced in India as the sole legal tender, with a rupeé weighing 1 tola or 180 grs. troy and containing 165 grs. of fine silver. It was not substitution of gold standard by silver standard but of bi-metallism by monometallism. That it was to be silver monometallism instead of gold was decided by prevalent theories (of Locke, Harris and Petty) as well as practice (though not of England),[11] and popular preference played its part. Gold, however, continued to be freely coined at the Mint and to increase the revenue from seignorage, the Government authorised in 1841 receipt of gold *mohurs* of the same weight and fineness at the treasuries at the gold-silver ratio of 1 to 15. Discovery of gold fields in Australia and California, however, upset the ratio; gold became overvalued, and the privilege granted in 1841 was withdrawn in 1852.[12]

The British system of revenue and finance and the enormous increase of trade called forth an increased demand for cash. But after 1850 the production of silver did not keep pace with the needs of the world, especially of countries like India, placed on an exclusive silver basis. To make matters worse, a large part of the coined silver was diverted from monetary to non-monetary purposes. As Cassels wrote in his minute on Gold Currency for India, "the mint has been pitted against the smelting pot, and the coin produced by so much patience and skill by the one has been rapidly reduced into bangles by the other."[13] The problem could not have been solved by augmenting the import of silver which had already reached the highest peak.[14] The lack of credit was woeful. Issue of interest-bearing treasury notes failed, as it was insufficient, confined in time to twelve months and in place to the Presidency towns.[15] By 1856 only twelve banks were in operation, of which the Bank of Bengal alone had more than a million pounds worth of notes in circulation.[16]

Under these circumstances the demand for a gold currency grew stronger.[17] But Sir Charles Wood (President of the India Board) was against a double standard and feared that a pure gold standard (where a sovereign worth ten rupees would be legal tender), when gold supply had become so abundant, would benefit the debtors only.[18] When he became the first Secretary of State for India, the situation had worsened, and in 1859 he was "thinking of trying a paper currency convertible at large treasuries and receivable as revenue".[19] He agreed with Wilson's (the first Finance Member of the India Government) paper currency plan except its provision for a fixed bullion reserve and its dependence in crisis on sale of securities.[20] Wilson's scheme of 1/3 silver reserve would end in issue of paper notes to three times the amount of bullion paid in. "The danger of an ill-regulated paper currency is that it is often issued beyond what would have been coined, and not diminished when coin would have been melted or exported. . . The quantity to be fixed is not.... the quantity of bullion, but the quantity of notes to be issued without bullion or coin "[21] In his view the sum beyond which all notes must be on metal basis should be fixed at 4 crores [22]

Laing, Wilson's successor as Finance Member, introduced some important changes in the original bill. First, he raised the lowest denomination of notes from Rs 5 to Rs. 20. Secondly, he proposed to accept gold bullion or coin and issue against that notes to an extent not exceeding one-fourth of the total amount of issues represented by coin and bullion. Thirdly, he proposed that only the Bank of Bengal (and other Presidency banks, if need be) would get notes for coin and act as agent of issue, for which it will receive a commission of 3/4%. Laing explained in a minute that his object was "simply to leave the door open for cautious and tentative experiments with regard to the future use of gold" for which there was a popular demand [23] Wood was furious and stormed at the innovations. First, people would bring gold, take notes against it, and then demand silver if the Government rate of exchange held out any hope of profit. Secondly, higher denomination notes were useless in a country of low wages Thirdly, mixing up of Government note circulation with banking business was not only dangerous but sheer throwing of money on the banks [24] Lord Elgin agreed.[25]

Wood considered himself an expert on paper currency. He dwelt on the danger of over-issue and he even suspected a conspiracy between the promoters of the new plan, the British merchants, who were its supporters, and the Bank.[26] "I admit the infinite temptation to the Bank to go on as usual in dangerous times, and to trust to issuing beyond the mark when the pinch comes. The general body

of the mercantile community are, I daresay, for this system. It comes in aid of them when they have got into difficulty...."[27]

The paper currency, established under Act XIX of 1861, did not prove the panacea it was avowed to be, and the value of total note circulation by the end of 1863 reached 6 crores of rupees, which, in Cassels' view, was about 6% of the whole metallic currency. An unprecedented demand for Indian cotton, caused by the American Civil War, resulted in a heavy pressure for currency which proved inadequate. Once again the cry arose for a gold currency[28] and for restoration of the clauses in Laing's Paper Currency Act, ruled out as offensive by Wood.[29] Sir Charles Trevelyan, who had succeeded Laing, openly advocated a gold standard: sovereigns and half-sovereigns should be legal tender at the rate of one sovereign for Rs. 10, and currency notes should be convertible either for rupees or sovereigns, but not for bullion. The Government of India accepted the proposal[30] but the Secretary of State would not allow any deviation from the mono-metallic system, i.e. the transitional stage of double standard envisaged in Trevelyan's plan. He not only found flaw in the undervaluing of sovereign[31] but objected on principle to a double standard, in which the cheaper metal would prevail. "You cannot by law make it cheaper to use gold, for that would be a fraud if done intentionally, and if it is more convenient to use gold in spite of some small loss, the people would do so without a law'.[32] He would only concede acceptance of gold coin at a rate to be fixed by the Government without making it a general legal tender. As the notification of November 1864 fixed the value of a sovereign at Rs. 10, below the real par, it remained inoperative.

The currency situation forced the Government to appoint the Mansfield Commission in 1866 which advised acceptance of gold as legal tender.[33] The Government dared not act on this recommendation and only raised the exchange rate for a sovereign to Rs. 10-4 annas (1868). As the cotton boom died down, the excessive pressure for currency abated and the home authority congratulated itself on its wisdom in sticking to the silver standard of 1835, now supplemented by paper. A little too soon, as events proved.

The author of this Chapter finds no evidence in the private correspondence of the time of any sinister design of the India Office to make a profit on remittances by retaining the silver standard. Introduction of a gold standard might have been easier at this stage and might have averted misfortunes occurring in future, but to criticize Wood with our knowledge of later events would be unhistorical. His personal experience was against it, he found support in the academic circles,[34] he could never trust Laing or Trevelyan fully[35], and

the issue of note circulation was mixed up with the grant of a commission to, and keeping of large Government balances with, the Persidency Banks, much to his distaste. Wilson and his successors were well-known champions of British planters and capitalists and their hobnobbing with the Bengal Bank was suspect in the eyes of the Secretary of State. One of the reasons why the paper currency did not assume a large proportion was neglect of Wood's criticism of higher denomination notes.[36] On the controversy over the use of banks as commission agents, both parties were wrong. Owing to the prevalence of internal exchange, the profit on remittances on different centres was so great that the commission of 3/4% proved to be little inducement to the banks and the agreement on this score had to be dropped in 1866.[37] No doubt the Independent Treasury System contributed to the difficulty of encashability of notes, and keeping of Government balances with the banks for this purpose and by way of compensation for the loss of their right of note issue may not be inherently bad, but the failure of the Bank of Bengal in 1863 and of the Bank of Bombay in 1874 to meet Government drafts showed that Wood's apprehensions were not unfounded. Moreover, there was little bank credit available in India to supplement Government currency and, credit. The mistake lay in a slavish imitation of the English system which would not work under Indian conditions[38]

The problem of the last quarter of the nineteenth century was not, however, the lack of elasticity but the violent fluctuations of the rupee-sterling exchange. The rate of exchange for a *sicca* rupee had been 2s. 6d. sterling before 1813. So long as the excess of exports over imports remained equal to the annual private remittable income and the annual home charges remittable by the Company (about two crores and a half in 1818),[39] the exchange would remain at par If it rose above, there would be a favourable exchange, and if it fell below, the exchange would decline. Up to 1816 the actual excess of exports per annum was sufficient to convey the remittable capital. But with the increasing British imports since 1818-19 the amount of remittable capital shot up to cause a fall of exchange. As remittance through trade languished, the exchange fell further.[40] The normal rate ultimately steadied round 1 rupee for 1s. $10\frac{1}{2}$d.[41]

So steady was this rate up to 1872[42] that few people were conscious that India and Britain were on different currency standards. In 1873 gold-silver exchange lost its old moorings and this dislocation was reflected in the rupee-sterling exchange. The rupee was worth $22\frac{3}{8}$ d. in 1873, and by 1878 fell to $19\frac{3}{4}$ d. There was a slight recovery in 1879 and 1880 and then a slight fall to $19\frac{5}{16}$ d. in 1884.

From 1885 began a period of rapid fall which reached 14.5d. in 1893.[43]

The fall in the gold value of silver, which caused this, has been explained in either of two ways[44]—(1) a great increase in the production of silver as compared to that of gold, and (2) demonetization of silver by the principal countries of the world. Rival schools of interpretation grew up round these alternative explanations. It has been shown that silver had been most of the time falling in proportion, and though the proportion began to rise since 1873, it did not reach half the magnitude it had reached in the beginning of the 18th century. Secondly, there was little correlation between the supply and value of silver. If over-supply was the cause of fall in the value of silver after 1873, why did it not operate in the same way in the case of gold in the 1850's?[45] Goschen concluded that fall in the gold value of silver could be explained by (1) demonetization policy of Germany and Scandinavia, (2) financial distress of Austria and Italy which had forced them to inflate their paper currency beyond measure and so to drive out silver, (3) cessation of silver purchase by France, and (4) the much diminished demand from India (during depression following the cotton boom).[46] Lord Salisbury considered these factors temporary and optimistically prepared himself for a fall up to 18 d. in 1876. The real crux in his view was not Bismarck but India which had absorbed 70% of the total production during the last 24 years. With the prosperity of the Indian purchaser, the demand for silver would rise and, naturally, its value.[47] He would not listen to the cry for a gold standard raised by the European chambers of commerce.[48]

The question could not be shelved two years later. The fall continued and the Government of India, with its expenditure account already swollen by the Afghan War, was faced with a rapidly rising sterling commitment.[49] Strachey proposed limitation on coinage of the rupee.[50] The Lords of the Treasury, to whom the draft Bill was referred, were still undecided as to the cause of the fall in exchange, and considered that the proposals aimed at relieving the India Government from loss by exchange on the home remittances, the civil and military servants who desired to remit money to England, and the British capitalists who had invested money in India and wished to remit profits home. "But this relief will be given at the expense of the Indian tax payer, and with the effect of increasing every debt or fixed payment in India, including debts due by *ryots* to money-lenders", while, so far as the Government was concerned, its good effect would be qualified by enhancement of its obligations contracted on a silver basis.[51]

As the rupee fell very slightly over the next six years, there was a lull in the currency debate. Early in 1886 the rupee began to show a steep downward trend and the Government had to find out more and more rupees to meet its sterling payments.[52] Dufferin sent a frantic telegram for permission to establish a bi-metallic currency. Randolph Churchill, the Secretary of State, confessed that it was a question "of which...I am as ignorant as a carp and of which I now have neither the time nor the industry to commence the practical and effective study."[53] Others seemed to be equally confused and "I can only harp again on the old recommendation of economy". The recommendation did not go well with the Burma War. The Liberal Kimberley could offer nothing better than his Conservative predecessor,[54] and his Conservative successor, Lord Cross, would not agree to bi-metallism.[55] He referred the question to the Finance Committee of the India Council, which urged on the appointment of a Commission of Inquiry, as fall of rupee by every penny meant an additional charge of £1 million, and the only remedy, reimposition of customs or increase of salt tax, would be politically undesirable. The Treasury refused once again to countenance bi-metallism, and to the objections, put forward by Sir Stafford Northcote six years earlier, they added a positive argument, namely, the great stimulus which the fall in exchange had given to India's export trade.[56]

The rupee continued to fall. The International Conference of Brussels in 1892, like its two predecessors of Paris (1878, 1881), produced no change in the situation. It was, moreover, likely that the U.S.A. would repeal the clauses of the Sherman Act, which provided for the annual purchase of 54 million ounces of silver. There was a fall in the gold value of rupee securities[57] and the British investors fought shy of the Indian market, which seriously affected the Government's "extraordinary public works". The municipalities and the local boards suffered for reduction of central financial aid. Though the official rate of exchange, somewhat higher than the market rate, afforded some relief to the civil and military servants at the cost of the exchequer, they could not remit as profitably as they had done before 1873.

Quite different, it has been assumed, was the effect on India's trade. R. C. Dutt and others held that, favoured by the fall in exchange, the total trade of the country had more than doubled itself in twenty years.[58] Secondly, the progress in the direction of manufactures was marked, with a chain reaction on Indian agriculture. Taking 1868-69 as the base year (= 100) the exports of wheat had grown to 11,001.44 in 1891-92, and of tea to 1,075.75. The Indian manufactures were almost ousting the English products from the eastern

markets. It is debatable, however, whether a change in the real terms of trade between two countries can take place without a change in the comparative cost of their respective products.[59] Fall in exchange would act as a bounty to the Indian producer only if the fall of silver in England in terms of gold was greater than the fall of silver in terms of commodities in India. Such an assumption was groundless, and there was no extraordinary flow of silver to India, which must have resulted if it were correct. If there was a bounty to exporters, it was temporary, and it was at the cost of the wage-earners and the primary producers,[60] whose lot escaped the notice of the Indian historians, the members of the India Council and the Lords of the Treasury. The repeated attempts of the India Government to secure permission for bi-metallism came to nothing, and it was treated as a villain in the International Conferences, manoeuvring to pounce upon the dwindling gold stock. In 1892 it was praying once again for the closing of the Indian mints to the unlimited coinage of silver.[61]

The Herschell Committee (1892-93) was satisfied with these proposals and its recommendations were carried into effect on 26 June, 1893, by Act VIII and three executive notifications. (1) Free coinage of silver was stopped but Government could coin rupees in exchange for gold at 1s. 4d. per rupee. This was equivalent to a bullion parity of 43.1 pence per ounce. (2) Gold sovereigns and half-sovereigns would be received in satisfaction of public dues at the rate of 15 rupees and Rs. 7·8 annas respectively. (3) Currency notes would be issued in exchange for gold coin at the above rate and gold bullion at one rupee for 7.53344 grs. troy of fine gold. (4) Gold coins and bullion would be received by the Mint Masters on certain conditions. The British Treasury almost sacrificed Indian interests for an agreement with France and the U.S.A. on a stable monetary par of exchange between gold and silver (which would have nullified the Act of 1893), but the Government of India's strong stand saved the situation.[62] Thus did India go off the silver standard to which she has never returned.

Once, however, the rupee-stock was exhausted, the new arrangements began to show strain. The discount in the Indian money market rose to 16%. In fact, the currency system was still inelastic, hardly able to provide for expansion. The India Government (Probyn plan) proposed additions to currency through the use of gold by making the sovereign general legal tender,[63] though the Government could alternatively coin rupees whenever in need (Lindsay's plan).[64] Under the pressure of the European Chambers of Commerce, Westland, the Finance Member, was asking for a gold standard with

a gold currency, [64a] while the advocates of the latter course proposed a gold standard without a gold currency. The Fowler committee of 1898 was called upon to choose between them. It rejected both Probyn's and Lindsay's plans. Instead, it recommeded a gold standard with gold coins in circulation, making the sovereign legal tender and a current coin. But stringency in the money-market was against limiting the legal tender quality of rupees. The Government should be ready to use gold to support exchange and should coin no more rupees until the proportion of gold in the currency exceeded the public requirements. The Act XXII of 1899 was passed accordingly, making the British sovereign and half sovereign legal tender and a current coin at the rate of Rs. 15 and Rs. $7\frac{1}{2}$ respectively (1s. 4d. the rupee) and authorizing issue of notes in exchange for them.[65]

But the Government of India's scheme failed to materialize and its rival plan (A. M. Lindsay's) ultimately came to be adopted as the Gold Exchange Standard.[66] According to that plan the Government was to give rupees in every case in return for gold, and gold for rupees only in case of foreign remittances. It was to be worked through the sale of rupee drafts in London without limit (called Council Bills) and of sterling drafts in India (called Reverse Councils) as rupees or gold were wanted. The former was launched in 1904 when the Secretary of State promised to sell Council Bills at 1s $4\frac{1}{8}$d. the rupee (which was the normal gold import point) without limit, and the latter came in 1908 when sterling drafts began to be sold at 1s. $3\frac{29}{32}$ d. the rupee. The Gold Standard Reserve was instituted in 1900 out of profits on coinage, and its rupee branch was opened in 1907 as an emergency fund to avoid delay in shipping bullion from London and coining it in India. By 1913 it was already over £22 million, largely in liquid form, and able to meet any crisis Besides this, the India Government built up two reserves, one of gold and the other of rupees, out of cash balances and the paper currency reserve. The gold part of the reserves was mainly located in London and the silver in India. The plain effects were, therefore, that (1) the gold sovereign *became* full legal tender,[67] (2) the silver rupee *remained* full legal tender, (3) the rupee, unlimited in issue, became inconvertible, till a fall in exchange, and, even then, without any guarantee of convertibility, and (4) that the Government alone had now the monopoly of coining silver did not prevent an overissue.

II. BANKING

The house of Jagat Seths dominated the field of indigenous banking in Bengal (and outside Bengal) before its conquest by the East India Company.[68] Mir Kasim's ruinous expropriation, loss of the

privilege to receive Government revenues after 1765, and transfer of the treasury to Calcutta in 1772 brought about the fall of the house, and on its ruins sprang up numerous native shroffs like Hazari Mal, Dayal Chand and Monohar Das Dwarka Das. Meanwhile, the European agency houses of Calcutta had added banking to their multifarious business, and we hear of the Bank of Hindostan, run by Alexander & Co. (1770), the Bengal Bank (1784), and the General Bank of India (1786), the last-mentioned being the earliest joint-stock bank with limited liability.[69] The Bengal Bank had official proprietors and tried to secure Government patronage, but the General Bank was more fortunate. On lending twenty lakhs of current rupees to Cornwallis, it secured recognition of its notes and became virtual bankers of the Government. There were runs on the Bengal Bank and the Bank of Hindostan when news of British reverses in the Third Anglo-Mysore War reached Calcutta, and they failed in 1791. The Government came to their assistance in view of the possible disastrous effects on public credit, public contractors and holders of Government securities.[70] The latter survived with this help.

In 1806 Barlow proposed the establishment of a chartered bank at Calcutta to be "of the greatest service to the commercial interests of this Presidency" and to "afford the most essential aid to all the financial operations of this government, by defeating the measures and combinations to which the numerous individuals at this Presidency. . .invariably resort, for the depreciation of public securities, whenever an opportunity is afforded to them for that purpose, by the pressure of public or private distress.[71] Pending the Court's decision, a provisional bank[72] was set up with nine directors, three nominated by the Government and six nominated by the subscribers (each share was worth Rs. 10,000), till a formal election should take place on the Court's approval. The notes of the Bank soon replaced the depreciated Treasury Bills. But the Court suspected the move to be in the interest of the agency houses,[73] and withheld its sanction to a permanent institution till 1808. The Bank of Bengal, the first Chartered Bank in India, was launched on its career on 2 January, 1809, with a capital of 50 lakhs It was entrusted with the funds (10 lakhs) of the Government, its notes alone were recognized, and it monopolized all business, with the Bengal Bank defunct, the Central Bank dissolved, and the Bank of Hindostan moribund.

The tragic failure of the agency houses of Calcutta between 1826 and 1832 underlined the urgent necessity of expansion of commercial banking. Banking business had always been an adjunct to their multifarious trading and financial activities. Run on unscientific

lines and drained of funds to bolster marginal indigo concerns or to satisfy claims of departing partners, they could not cope with the crisis. Cheaper and safer banking was a battle cry of the free-traders of 1833, and their victory was clinched by the grant of a charter to the Union Bank in 1835.[74] The first Bank of Bombay was established under a charter, similar to that of the Bank of Bengal, in 1840, and the Bank of Madras followed in 1843.[75] Until 1862 the three Presidency Banks worked under severe restrictions (a price for their privileges), the most important of which was limitation on purchase or sale of bills on London, China, etc. i.e. on exchange operations.

The Union Bank, however, crashed with many other private banking and agency concerns during the crisis of 1847-48. "In the absence of established and well-accredited means of conducting the exchanges, a system had arisen exactly similar in its nature to that known at home by the term 'accommodation bills'.. Houses in Calcutta drew upon their own Houses in London and the Houses in London to cover themselves drew new sets of Bills and, with the proceeds of such Bills, purchased other Bills upon other Houses...and (Calcutta Houses) transmitted them to the Houses in London to pay former Bills of their own drawing". Thus an enormous amount of cross bills became current, representing no transactions, and, what was even worse, drawn without any regard to the state of exchange, under the dire necessity to meet engagements at all hazards. The crisis once again underlined the danger of a policy of exclusiveness pursued by the Company. Until a liberal policy was adopted to encourage commercial and exchange banking on legitimate lines, a fictitious and unsound system was bound to reappear.[76]

The Court opposed such a policy as late as 1852. Authority had been given to the three Presidency Banks to issue notes to the aggregate amount of 5 crores of rupees, but notes to the amount of only 2 crores were in circulation. The minimum cash balance had been fixed at one-fourth of the outstanding obligations, but the cash balances actually kept were only a little below the obligations in two cases and, in one case, went above The Presidency Banks could easily enlarge their liabilities to three times under the so-called restrictive system Outside the Presidency towns the number of unchartered banks were 7 in Bengal and 2 in Bombay—the biggest in the former being the Agra and United Service Bank (est. 1833) with a paid up capital of 60 lakhs. the North-West Bank of India (est 1844) with 23 lakhs and the Delhi Bank (est. 1844) with 16 lakhs while the Oriental Bank (est. 1842) and the Commercial Bank of India (est. 1845) of Bombay had a proposed capital of 2 crores and 1 crore respectively. Only the Bombay banks issued notes to a smal

extent.[77] The Court, moreover, considered combination of banking and remittance operations unwise and refused to grant the privilege of note issue to other than the Presidency Banks.

Whatever the Court might say, the rapid rise of the value of the banking shares and the amount of dividends paid by the best banks[78] showed a considerable scope of expansion for ordinary banking, and the phenomenal increase of India's trade with Britain and the Far East had been calling for introduction of exchange banking. The note circulation of unchartered banks was restricted because their notes were not accepted in the treasuries. The cry against monopoly had been raised in the forties,[79] and the Oriental Bank (est. 1842) had secured permission from the British Treasury (1851) to establish agencies in India "for the purposes of exchange, deposit and remittance" to facilitate its banking operations in Ceylon, Mauritius and Hongkong. The Court had opposed the charter but it had been established in law that the Crown could grant it for the limited purpose of exchange, deposit and remittance. The first round had been won and the second round opened in the fifties, when memorials poured upon the India Board and the Treasury for permission to establish more exchange banks[80] Wilson, Financial Secretary to the Treasury, advised Wood to initiate a liberal policy. A grant of limited liability (to double the amount of shares held) in exchange for checks and safeguards (viz. capital to be entirely paid up in two years, etc.) would be much safer than an insistence on unlimited liability without checks.[81] The Chartered Bank of India, Australia and China received the Royal Charter on 29 December, 1853, as a result of this debate, but commenced business only from 1858.

The whole position was reviewed in 1861 in connection with the passing of the Act XIX Till that year the Government had not issued any notes and the three Presidency Banks were the most important note-issuing banks. When the Government deprived them of the right of note-issue by the Act XIX, it relaxed the statutory limitations on their business and granted them certain benefits as its agents for transacting the paper currency[82] The agency was taken away in 1866. The Bank of Bombay was dissolved in 1868, though a new bank of the same name was floated in the same year. The Presidency Banks Act of 1876,[82a] amended in 1879, 1899 and 1907, governed them till the formation of the Imperial Bank of India (1921). The Act of 1876 imposed severe restrictions on the charter and mode of their business. They could not deal in exchange, borrow or receive deposits payable out of India, or lend money for a period longer than three months (till 1907, then six months), or upon mortgage or on immovable property. In return, the Government relin-

quished its share of capital and abandoned the policy of direct interference in management. But they also ceased to enjoy the use of Government balances by the development of the Reserve Treasury System, and in 1877 the Secretary of State refused to allow them to set up agencies in England. In spite of this, their total deposits rose from 6.4 crores in 1870 to 14 76 crores in 1890, to 32.34 crores in 1910, and to 76.18 crores in 1921.[83] They became bankers for the Government and, increasingly, banker's banks, i.e. the backbone of the internal banking system. Keynes' able advocacy for a Central Bank[83a] before the Chamberlain Commission bore fruit in the amalgamation of these banks in 1921 in the Imperial Bank of India, though it differed in vital respects from his model.

As the Presidency Banks were precluded from dealing in foreign exchange, the Exchange Banks came to fill the gap. To the Oriental Bank and the Chartered Bank of India, Australia and China were added the National Bank of India (1863), the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (1864), and the Chartered Mercantile Bank of India, London and China, etc. With the sudden fall of cotton prices after the end of the American Civil War, Liverpool was hard hit, the Overend Gurney & Co. failed, and the depression spread to Bombay. It overwhelmed the Commercial Bank Corporation of the East, the Agra and Masterman's Bank and the Asiatic Banking Corporation. At the beginning of 1866 there had been 24 exchange banks in Bombay and 22 in Calcutta. The following year there were only seven left in India. The Oriental Bank (first Chartered Exchange Bank)[84] crashed in 1884, and the new Oriental Bank, which replaced it next year, went into liquidation in 1893. By the turn of the century the Agra Bank was liquidated. The Exchange Banks suffered from the constant fluctuation of exchange rate during these years and made a most important contribution to India's economic development by assuming responsibility for a large part of the exchange risks. Besides these, there were agencies of banking corporations doing business all over Asia (major portion outside India), like Yokohama Specie Bank or Comptoir National d' Escompte de Paris. In 1921 the total number of banks of both these varieties was 17. Their aggregate paid up capital had risen to £ 66,369,000, reserve and rest to £ 45,263,000, while their deposits outside India amounted to £ 526,473,000 and in India to Rs. 75,19,61,000. When we remember that their total Indian deposits in 1870 amounted to only 52 lakhs of rupees, the progress is indeed striking. Their only defect was dangerously low cash balances which invited Professor Keynes' warning in 1913.[85]

The Indian Joint Stock Banks form a third category. Official banking statistics from 1913 have divided them into two classes—(1) those having a paid up capital and reserves of and over 5 lakhs of rupees, and (2) those having a paid up capital and reserves between 1 lakh and 5 lakhs. There were seven banks of the former type in 1870, mostly under European management. Only three of them—the Bank of Upper India (1863), the Allahabad Bank (1865) and the Bangalore Bank (1868) survived. Seven more were added between 1870 and 1894 of which the Alliance Bank of Simla (1874) and the Punjab National Bank (1894) were prominent. A fresh outburst occurred from 1904 and many important banks like the Bank of India (paid up capital—50 lakhs, reserve, etc.—5½ lakhs), the Indian Specie Bank and the Central Bank of India were founded.[86]

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1 Murshid Quli Khān had frustrated their earlier attempts, and the three Bengal revolutions between 1757-1763 did not give them an opportunity.
1a Sir James Steuart, *The Principles of Money applied to the Present State of the Coin in Bengal*, 1772.
1b J. C. Sinha, "Economic Theorist among the Servants of John Company," *Economic Journal*, March, 1925.
1c N. K. Sinha, *An Economic History of Bengal*, Vol. I, p. 123.
1d. A. Tripathi, *Trade and Finance in the Bengal Presidency*, 1793-1833, p. 14
1e. See preamble of Regulation XXXV of 1793
2 Sir John Shore's minute, Bengal Public Consultations, 29 Sept., 1796 F. C. Harrison, 'The Past Action of the Indian Government with regard to Gold', *Economic Journal*, Vol. III, pp. 54 ff
3 In 1768 100 star pagodas were worth 370 arcot rupees in the market.
4 See H. Dodwell, 'Substitution of Silver for Gold in South India', *Indian Journal of Economics*, January, 1921.
5 See report of Dr. Scott on the History of Coinage in the Bombay Presidency, with appendices, Bombay Public Consultations, 27 January, 1801
6 Court to G. G. in C., 25 April, 1806: "To adjust the relative values of gold and silver coin according to the fluctuations in the values of the metals would create continual difficulties, and the establishment of such a principle would of itself tend to perpetuate inconvenience and loss."
7 Madras Public Consult. No. 19, 7 January, 1818.
8. Bombay Financial Consult., 6 October, 1824
9. Bengal Regulation XI of 1819 and VII of 1833.
10 Bombay Financial Consult., 25 February and 14th April, 1824.
11 That the issue had not been finally decided in England was clear from Peel's famous proviso in the Bank Charter Act of 1844.
12 Dalhousie took fright at the unexpected depreciation of the value of gold. See Halifax to Northbrook, 7 Dec., 1872, Northbrook Papers (C. R.O.) Vol. I, pp. LXXXV-LXXXVII.
13. Report of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce, 1863-64, App. I, p. 189.
14. Ibid.
15. A.C.B. London, *How to meet the Financial Difficulties of India* (1859), p. 13.
16. R. M. Martin, *The Indian Empire*, Vol. I, p. 565.
17 *Papers relating to the Introduction of a Gold Currency in India*, 1866, pp. 1-3.
18. Wood to Dalhousie, 24 April, 1854, Wood (Halifax) Papers (India Board), Vol. V. p. 24.
19 Wood to Elphinstone, 31 August, 1859, ibid (India Office), Vol. I. p. 98.
20. Same to same, 2 November, ibid, p. 204.
21. Wood to H. Frere, 24 November, 1860, ibid, Vol. V, pp. 112-14
22. Wood to Laing, 26 March 1861, ibid, Vol. VII, pp. 64-66.
23. Laing's minute on Currency and Banking, 7 May, 1862.
24 Wood to Laing, 31 March, 1861, Halifax Papers, op cit., pp. 92-102; same to same, 26 March, 1862, ibid. Vol. X, p. 122.

25. Elgin to Wood, 28 April, 1862, Elgin Papers, Vol. I. f. 88.
26. Wood to Elgin, 9 April, 1862, ibid, f. 160. He later wrote to Trevelyan that both Beadon and Grey were shareholders of the Bank.
27. Wood to Elgin, 15 September, 1862, Halifax Papers, op cit., Vol XI, p. 136.
28. Report of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce, 1863-64, App. I, p. 206.
29. All the Chambers of Commerce petitioned the Government. Their great champion was Sir William Mansfield. See his minute on gold currency for India, House of Commons Return 79 of 1865.
30. Despatch No. 89, 14 July, 1864.
31. Wood to Bertle Frere, 16 January, 1864, Halifax Papers, op. cit., Vol. XV, p 198, Wood to Trevelyan, 3 May, 1864, ibid, Vol. XVI, p. 226; same to same, 11 June, 1864, ibid, Vol. XVII, p. 84.
32. Same to same, 31 August, 1864, ibid, Vol. XVIII p 64
33. For Report see House of Commons Return 148 of 1868
34. Professor J E. Cairnes, for example.
35. The past careers of both justified it to some extent
36. B. R. Ambedkar, *The Problem of the Rupee*, p. 56. Five rupee notes were issued from 1871.
37. See House of Commons Return, East India (Paper Money), 215 of 1862
38. See Professor Marshall's evidence before the Fowler Committee, Minutes of Evidence, Q. 11776.
39. See A. Tripathi, op cit., pp. 168-70.
40. Ibid.
41. It actually meant that gold-silver exchange became stable at the ratio of 1 to 15½, for, in absence of a common metal standard, exchange is governed by the relative value of metals.
42. There were fluctuations on a limited scale. The rupee fell to ls. 9d in 1848-49(a year of trade depression) and rose to about 2s. between 1850-53, 1855-60, 1862-64, which came to be considered as the normal level. Private merchants complained of arbitrary changes in the rate of exchange by the Court of Directors to suit their own needs.
43. Report, Indian Currency Committee (1893), App II, p. 270 See also correlation of exchange and silver prices in Dickson H. Leavens, *Silver Money* (Indiana, 1939), p. 11, Chart 2.
44. See Leavens, op cit., Chapt. V.
45. The value of silver, expressed in gold, changed only from 59¾d. in 1848 to 60½d in 1870, i.e, by 2%
46. Salisbury to Lytton, 30 June, 1876 Lytton Papers (C R.O.), Vol. I. He might have added (1) suspension of free coinage of silver in the U.S.A. from 1873 and (2) partial suspension in Russia from 1876
47. Same to same, 22 August, 1876, ibid.
48. Same to same, 12 Sept., 1876, ibid.
49.

Year.	Total excess of rupees needed to provide for the net sterling payments over those required in 1874-75.
1875	86,97,980
1876	3,15,06,820
1877	1,30,05,481
1878	1,85,23,170

See Report of the Indian Currency Committee, (1893), App. 2, p. 270.
50. Financial Despatch, 9 November, 1878. The resident Englishman, officer or trader, who received his salary or profits in rupees, was in a quandary. Where 100 rupees saved in India brought him a remittance of £ 10 before, a 25% depreciation of gold value of the rupee now brought him only £ 7-10s.
51. This is from Sir Stafford Northcote. Goschen was against restrictions on silver coinage and Giffen thought gold was appreciating. See Salisbury to Lytton, 3 January and 2 February, 1879. Lytton Papers, op. cit., Vol. IV.
52.

Year	Total excess of rupees needed over those needed in 1874.
1886	4,269,16,788
1887	4,63,13,161
1888	9,00,38,166
1889	7,75,96,889
1890	9,06,11,857
1891	10,44,44,529

Report of the Indian Currency Committee, op. cit.

53. Randolph Churchill to Lord Dufferin, 14 January, 1886. Dufferin Papers in microfilm, C.R.O.
54. Kimberley to Lord Dufferin, 21 May, 1886, ibid.
55 Lord Cross to Lord Dufferin, 13 August, 1886, ibid.
56. They considered a fixed ratio between gold and silver utterly impracticable. Treasury to India office, 31 May, 1886
57. Report of the Indian Currency Committee, (1893), App. 2, p. 272.
58.

Year	Exports. Rs.	Imports. Rs.
1870-71	57,556,951	39,913,942
*1873-74	56,548,842	36,43,210
1878-79	64,919,741	44,857,343
1883-84	89,186,397	68,157,311
1888-89	98,833,879	83,285,427
*1891-92	111,460,278	84,155,045

Report of the Indian Currency Committee (1898), App II (Nos 1 and 2).
59. See evidence and memorandum of Professor Marshall before the Royal Commission on Gold and Silver (1886). A favourable effect of depreciation has not been proved in the case of wheat exports. See Karl Ellstaetter, *The Indian Silver Currency* (Chicago), Chapter II.
60. John Maynard Keynes, *Indian Currency and Finance*, pp. 2-4.
61. Government of India, Fin. Despatch, No. 160, 21 June, 1892, and No. 205, 2 August, 1892 The Government was losing on remittances for Home Charges, and the British in India (except the planters) had a personal interest in higher exchange. See Memorials, Herschell Committee, Minutes of Evidence, pp. 155-59. But the exporters of cotton piece-goods to India opposed it. See Lansdowne Papers (C R.O); Lansdowne to Kimberley, 23 August, 13 September, and 5 October, 1892 (MSS. EUR. D 558, IX, Vol. IV), and same to same, 1 February and 3 May, 1893 (MSS. EUR. D 558, IX, Vol. V).
62 Government of India, Fin. Despatch, 16 September, 1897.
63. Government of India, Fin. Despatch, No. 49, 17 February, 1897.
64 For the earliest elaboration of A. M. Lindsay's scheme, See *Calcutta Review*, October, 1878, and for Mr. Lesley Probyn's scheme, *Economic Journal*, Vol VII, pp. 574-75 The former may be called the Gold Exchange Standard, and the latter, Gold Bullion Standard For criticism, see evidence of Lord Rothschild before Fowler Committee
64a Government of India, Fin. Despatch, No 70, 3 March, 1898. Also see Elgin to Lord George Hamilton, 3 March, 24 March, 5 May, and 12 May, 1898. EUR. MSS F 84, Vol. 16
65. The majority of witnesses took the Home Charges for granted and the rate of 1s. 4d. for a rupee just Of the two Indian witnesses, Mr Rustomji recommended the reduced rate of 1s. 2d. and R C. Dutt was against artificial fixing of the sterling value of rupee. Minutes of Evidence, Fowler Committee, Q. 10,707.
66. See J M. Keynes, op cit., Chapters, II, V and VI.
67. The attempt of minting gold in India (1900-1901) was frustrated by the British Treasury. See ibid, pp 64-66 for Keynes's support of the Treasury view. The hoarding habit of the Indian public and unsuitability as currency of sovereign of high value would have made the experiment a failure.
68. N. K. Sinha, op. cit, pp 137-145
69 H. Sinha, *Early European Banking in India*, p 9.
70. J. C. Sinha, op. cit.
71. G. G. in. C. to Court (Public), 13 March, 1806. Actually, Henry St. George Tucker, the Accountant General , was behind this.
72. It was called "Bank of Calcutta" or "Bank of Bengal'" indifferently, in the beginning.
73. Court to G. G. in C. (Public), 9 Sept., 1807.
74. It had been founded in 1829. Dwarkanath Tagore was a director of this Bank. As Brunyate says, "out of their (agency houses') ruin rose the Union Bank, a joint stock Bank created by cooperation among all the leading Calcutta houses". Bank of Hindostan had failed with Alexander & Co.
75. The former started with a capital of 56 lakhs and the latter with 30. See J. Wilson's memorandum on 'Banks in India,' 14 March, 1853, Halifax Papers (India Board), op. cit.

76 Ibid. See also Wilson, *Capital, Currency and Banking* (1847), and Editorials in the *Economist* which he had founded in 1843.
77. Court to the India Board, 11 November, 1852
78. (a) The £ 25 share of Oriental Bank rose to £ 55/£ 60.

(b)

Banks	Dividends last paid.
Bank of Bengal	8½%
„ Madras	10%
„ Bombay	5½%
Oriental Bank	10%
Commercial Bank	7%
Agra and United Service Bank	8%

See J. Wilson to Sir Charles Wood, 22 January, 1853, Halifax Papers (India Board), op. cit.
79 See Auckland to Court, 21 April, 1841, and H T. Prinsep's minute favouring establishment of exchange banks, return to House of Commons, 8 March and 7 April, 1843. Jardine of Jardine, Mathiesson & Co. made the first move for it on 3 April, 1840. Halifax Papers (India Board), op cit.
80. T.W. Henderson (Chairman of Bank of Asia) to Sir Charles Wood, 16 May, 1853; G. Arbuthnot (of Oriental Bank) to same, 2 March, 1853; Memorial of Bank of Asia to the Treasury, 25 April, 1853. Ibid
81 Wilson's memorandum to Wood, 11 June, 1853 Ibid.
82 Compton Mackenzie, *Realms of Silver* (1954), pp 16-27.
82a Sir William Muir on the Presidency Banks Bill, Government of India, Legislative Proceedings, April, 1876, No. 284, Vol. 1017.
83 On a paid up capital of 2 crores the Bank of Bengal paid a dividend of 8½% in 1880 which rose to 19½% in 1920, on a capital of 1 crore the Bank of Bombay paid 7½% in 1880 and 22% in 1920, and on a capital, rising from 50 lakhs in 1880 to 75 lakhs in 1913, the Bank of Madras paid 8% in 1880 and 18% in 1920 See Chablani, *Indian Currency, Banking and Exchange*, p. 154. Also J. M Keynes, op cit, p 204
83a Lord George Hamilton was in favour of amalgamation of Presidency Banks and establishment of a Central Bank, and Rothschild was consulted in 1899 See Dawkins to Curzon, 20 January, 1899, and 5 October, 1900, Letters and Telegrams England and Abroad (of Curzon), British Museum, Vol I, p 10 b, p 174 a. But Law, the Finance Member, did not dare Same to same, 28 February, 1901, ibid, p 211.
84 Though Keynes calls this Delhi and London Bank the first exchange bank in India, it had more the character of an Indian joint stock bank than that of an Exchange Bank proper Moreovver, the Oriental was established two years earlier.
85 J. M Keynes, op cit p. 216.
86 Ibid p. 224

CHAPTER XXXVII

LAND REVENUE POLICY

By 1818 the Permanent Settlement had lost its first bloom, and grave doubts about its wisdom had caused a reorientation of the East India Company's land revenue policy outside the Bengal Presidency. The primary object of Pitt, Dundas and Cornwallis was to secure a maximum stable revenue. In the sad state of the Company's finances, produced by the first imperialist wars and the less spectacular, though more ruinous, 'shaking of the pagoda tree' by its own servants, Hastings' quinquennial and annual settlements appeared to be costly and amateurish bungling which had ended in instability, corruption and rural stagnation. The speculating revenue-farmer had broken the personal link between the original *Zamindar* and his *ryots*, and the newly appointed Collector had been either too ignorant or too collusive. Frequent defalcations left little surplus to be invested in trade and made it extremely difficult to cope with a growing civil and military establishment. The authorities in London and India decided in this context that a moderate *jumma*, permanently assessed, and a hereditary ownership for the *Zamindar* in return for a strictly punctual payment, could alone bring the impecunious Company out of the maze created by half-understood history, widely varying customs and faulty experiments.

Professor Percival Spear's comparison of the Bengal landlords with the Tudor gentry[1] betrays his ignorance of the product of the Cornwallis system, but, perhaps, he has in mind R. C. Dutt's vigorous defence.[2] The Company had hoped to create an improving landlord, but its over-weening object of maximisation of revenue helped to create, in most cases, a sucker. Even before the Permanent Settlement was extended to Northern Circars and Orissa (1802-5), the defects of the system had become too glaring to be glossed over, and a painful re-appraisal led to the adoption of different land revenue policies in Madras, Bombay and North-West Provinces. The Bengal civilians were opposed to permanent assessment on financial grounds. Sir Thomas Munro's experience as a Settlement Officer in Madras convinced him of the evils of a *laissez faire* policy. The Benthamite Holt Mackenzie, Secretary to a Commission of Inquiry in 1819, drew attention to the existence of village proprietory bodies in N.W.P., who could not very well be treated like the Bengal *Zamindars*. Ricardian theory of rent became popular from the fourth decade of the nineteenth century and the Utilitarians among the Indian administrators

began to regard rent as a surplus.[2a] The Bengal system, based on single landlords and unalterable assessment, was dropped. The different systems of land tenure adopted in consequence in different parts of India have been described above in Chapters XII (Section 7) and XXVIII (Section 7).

To sum up the position in the middle of the nineteenth century, the Company's land revenue policy differed from region to region. There were policies, no one policy, based on differences in geography, history and tradition, and differences in stages in the decline of the village community and peasant rights under the double impact of the breakdown of the Mughul empire and the introduction of Western ideas of freedom of contract, utilitarianism and *laissez faire*. In Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Banaras and Northern Circars, *Zamindari* settlement and permanent assessment prevailed. Land was held by a landlord, who paid a fixed revenue, and relations between him and his tenants were left to mutual contract, the Government keeping neutral. In Northern India prevailed (besides *talukdari* in Awadh which resembled the Bengal *Zamindari*) several systems, which were more or less variants of one another, representing various stages of the village community in decline. They were *Mahalwari* (in many parts of N.W.P.), village-*wari* (Delhi and the Panjāb) and *Malguzari* (C.P.). While *Malguzars* held land and paid revenue directly, the proprietors of *Mahalwari* areas owned severally but paid through *lambardars*, and those of village-*wari* areas owned severally but paid jointly as a village. The settlement was usually for 30 years. In Madras and Bombay the settlement was *ryotwari* i.e. directly with the ryots, who paid rents to the State in the same manner, which were revisable at each settlement.[3] A tabulation of the ratio between revenue and gross produce, region by region, is given below along with the source from which the information is derived.

Region	Revenue as % of gross produce	Source of estimate
Bengal	5.6%	In Hunter's *Statistical Account of Bengal* rent has been shown to be 20% of gross produce. The Famine Commission Report of 1878 (App., Vol. III, p. 387) makes out revenue to be 28% of rent. Thus revenue is 28% of 20% of gross produce or about 5.6%
N.W.P.	8%	Antony Macdonnell's evidence before Indian Currency Commission, 1898, part I, pp. 211-12.
Madras	12 to 31%	The Famine Commission Report of 1878 App., Vol. III, p. 394.
Bombay	20 to 33%	" " "
Panjāb	10%	" " p. 305.

It is clear from the above that the Government demand was excessive in the *ryotwari* areas. So far as the tenant was concerned, he paid 1/5th of gross produce as rent in Bengal and N.W.P., but considerably more in other regions.

About 1860 the Government itself had become aware of this and was thinking of extending the benefits of permanent settlement to other provinces and checking exploitation of *ryots* in all areas, including those permanently settled. It has been described above,[4] how, after a protracted discussion extending over many years this idea was finally given up.

The second important problem before the Government was relations between the landlord and the tenant in Northern India. A qualified policy of *laissez faire* had been followed in this respect since 1793. The matter of rent had been left to private contract between the landlord and the tenant. Yet Regulations of early years had rendered substantial help to the stronger contracting party. It was felt in the fifties of the nineteenth century that this dubious and one-sided policy should be discarded and the balance redressed. John Stuart Mill, long in the service of the Company, postulated the new philosophy of control and regulation in the interests of the tenant who had so long been the Cinderella of the land revenue policy. "When the habits of the people are such that their increase is never checked but by the impossibility of obtaining a bare support, and when this support can only be obtained from land, all stipulations and agreements respecting amount of rent are merely nominal; the competition for land makes the tenants undertake to pay more than it is possible that they should pay, and when they have paid all they can, more must always remain due"[5] His remedy was that "peasant rents ought never to be arbitrary, never at the discretion of the landlord; either by custom or by law it is imperatively necessary that they should be fixed: and where no mutually advantageous custom, such as the Metayer system of Tuscany, has established itself, reason and experience recommend that they should be fixed by authority, thus changing the rent into a quit-rent, and the farmer into a peasant proprietor".[6]

The Rent Act (Act X) of 1859[7] heralded this new approach to agrarian relations in the permanently settled areas of Bengal. The desperate resistance of the indigo-cultivators underlined the general problem. It was not for nothing that the European planters had demanded landlord rights in 1833, and acquired *Zamindaris* or *Putnis*, whenever unable to control the indigo-cultivators by the usual methods. Native landlords had been disregarding long standing rights of occupancy, treating all *ryots* as tenants-at-will and rack-

renting or evicting them at pleasure. It was to protect the majority of Bengal tenants, sacrificed at the altar of contract, that the Act X of 1859 was passed.

The Act X of 1859 recognized three distinct classes of tenants—(1) those holding from the time of the Permanent Settlement at a fixed rent, (2) occupancy *ryots*, and (3) tenants-at-will. By clause IV, holding for twenty years at the same rent furnished *prima facie* evidence of the first class of tenancy. Rents of the second class could not be raised except on specific reasonable grounds laid down in the law and, with certain exceptions, occupancy for twelve years was proof of such rights (Clause VI). *Ryots* of Bengal fell mostly under this class. Clause VIII distinguished them from the tenants-at-will who held for a lesser number of years.

Unfortunately, Canning, anxious to conciliate the Anglo-Indians, inflamed against him for his Mutiny measures, passed immediately after the Rent Act the first Temporary Contract Bill (Act XI of 1860).[8] To make matters worse, Justices Peacock and Jackson interpreted a series of appeals under the great Rent Act in such a way as to nullify its object and leave the *Zamindars* (and the planters with *Zamindari* rights) the old whiphand. Moreover, Act VI (B) of 1862 contained provisions for recovery of rent, favourable to the *Zamindars* and planters. Charles Wood was forthright in his condemnation of such a policy. He had opposed the first Contract Bill and allowed it only as a temporary measure.[9] When Ritchie proposed to perpetuate it, he laid down the grounds of opposition—(1) general fraudulent nature of the contracts[10] and (2) impropriety of converting a civil into a criminal proceeding. Two years later we still find him opposing Maine on this matter.[11] It had only enabled the *Zamindars* and planters to raise rents by six times, harass tenants by litigation,[12] and evict them wholesale. It was nothing but application of the Irish methods.[13]

Peacock's first appellate decision on the position of the occupancy *ryots* (*Class II*) he viewed with equal distrust. "They have been tenants with certain rights, not easily measured in money, but always acknowledged. His decision reduces them apparently to the condition of tenants-at-will".[14] Peacock had ruled that when an alteration in the rent was made in consequence of an increase in the value of produce, the occupancy *ryot* was not entitled to have it fixed at a lower rate than that which a tenant, who did not possess occupancy rights, would give for it. He would thus make the *ryot* of Class II lose his customary right (which he possessed even before the Act of 1859) and be a prey to the theory of the survival of the fittest from which the Act was supposed to protect him.

The planters were naturally taking full advantage of his ruling and instituting thousands of eviction cases, which once again threatened the peace of the country-side. Enhancement of rent by a deliberate misinterpretation of the Act was being used "as a screw to compel the cultivation of indigo".[15]

The right to enhance rent on the ground of rise of prices or increase of productive powers, independently of any action of the tenants, existed before 1859. The Act X of that year only formulated it in clear terms (Cl. XVII). But in what proportion? And who would decide? In Peacock's view the Court would decide it each year. Wood rejected it as impracticable and unfair. Then, what should be the starting point with reference to which the doctrine of proportion would work? An admitted fair rent should be the starting point and any enhancement under law would be a proportion of this fair rent.[16] No judge could or should go into the question of fairness of the original rent. Clause XVII assumed the existing rent to be proper unless shown otherwise on grounds stated therein. Nor should Peacock challenge the twelve year occupation as proof of rights claimed by Class II tenants. "It is pretty clear to my mind that, seeing what he conceived to be the injustice to the landlord of the 12 years occupancy giving the right, he has set himself to work to invent a mode of defeating the Act.......... He refuses to consider the 12 years occupancy in clause VI to be proof of some antecedent right ....he considers clause VI as giving, for the first time, a right which did not exist before".[17] Campbell and Currie did not agree with Peacock Cl. XVII was not conferring on *ryots*, who acquired subsequent to the Permanent Settlement, any new rights as Peacock imagined. *Ryots* could always obtain by common consent occupancy rights.[18] The Act X of 1859 only acknowledged the rights they already possessed. The squatter for 12 years was treated differently and the Act conferred on them new rights. Peacock confused between the two and tried to reduce the former to the level of the latter and both to that of the tenant-at-will.

To avoid all this confusion Trevelyan proposed a permanent settlement of rents. Wood took a middle way—leaving twelve years' occupation as a presumptive proof of occupancy rights and requiring a longer term for giving an absolute right to the squatter. In the struggle over the Contract Bills and Rent Act Wood saw the inevitable tendency of the superior race to extinguish the customary rights of a native people through ruthless operation of law, the meaning or process of which they scarcely understood and which was so little adapted to their habits and notions. Everywhere, in the United States, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand, he saw

a world-wide struggle for land between the whites and the coloured. It was the duty of the Government to place the rights of *ryots* on a footing, able to defy encroachment by capitalists and settlers. "The individual settler never can have a permanent interest in the country for he can only live there for a limited number of years...... It is the duty of the government to see that a succession of a few transitory masters do not irritate the permanent millions".[19]

Wingfield did not allow Sir John Lawrence to extend to Awadh the same protection. The first Oudh Rent Act (Act XIX of 1868) was the result of a compromise in which the *Talukdars* made a few concessions to the *ryots* in return for the final disposal of the sub-settlement question. The Act XXVII of 1868 regulated and defined their position in the Panjàb, protected them from wanton enhancement, and laid down the improvements they might make and the compensation they might claim for them, on eviction.[20]

The climate of opinion changed very soon. In the seventies Duke of Argyll was arguing differently. He was opposed to the current interpretation of clause VI of the Rent Act, which made mere continuance of a holding for 12 years constitute a right of occupancy. In 1859 it was a useful rough mode of defining indefinite rights. "But to make it *prospective*, as well as *retrospective*—to provide for all future time that 12 years' undisturbed possession is always to constitute a forfeiture of ownership in favour of the tenant —is a system sure to lead to just discontent on the part both of owners and occupiers".[21] While discussing the Rent and Revenue Bills for the N.W. Provinces he gave his views on the growth of occupancy rights under Act X of 1859. A right of occupancy did not necessarily imply a right to sit at a low preference rent. The Court should always see whether the demand for increment of rent was reasonable, but the test of reasonableness should be the standard of the market, i.e. the rent which non-occupancy ryots were found willing and able to pay for similar land in the same or similar locality. "...If we pretend to acknowledge ownership in land at all, it is monstrous to deprive owners of that which belong to them on the ground that it is 'unearned'. It is quite as much 'unearned' by the tenant as by the owner".[22] The departure from Mill's philosophy was registered in a compromise formula, drafted by Inglis, Egerton and Crosthwaite, which granted protection to the occupancy *ryots* for 30 years against suits for increment and protection to the landlords against easy growth of occupancy rights in future. The formula also made it unnecessary for the landlords to shift the *ryots* from one land to another to prevent them from acquiring occupancy rights.[23] Argyll thought protection against increment should not

be given beyond 10 years. He was opposed to "manufacturing occupancy *ryots* on a vast scale", who, if protected against increment for a long period, would develop into a class of middlemen—"a bastard and pauper class—half farmer, half proprietor—but without the privileges which car also make either position profitable or of public advantage".[24] They would just sell away, interests thus acquired. But he had to agree to Sir William Muir's proposal of a preference rent for the occupancy *ryots* at 10, 20 or 25% below the market rate for similar land in the same district. In Argyll we see a vehement protagonist of the doctrine of *laissez faire*, a staunch believer in Social Darwinism, which would countenance with satisfaction the elimination of weaker tenures through natural selection.[25] The Government of India bowed down to the Secretary of State and altered the Rent and Revenue Bills to suit Herbert Spencer's philosophy.[26]

The consequences were serious. Agrarian disturbances broke out in East Bengal (especially, Pabna) in 1873, where landlords evaded the provisions of the Rent Act by frequent shifting of tenants and ignored the customary rights of those in occupation for less than 12 years. Law had taken away the protection which custom had always given,—how prophetic Wood proved! The disturbances continued for three consecutive years. In 1879 a Rent Commission was appointed which proposed recognition of a new class of subordinate occupancy *ryots* who had held land for 3 years. Alternatively, Rivers Thompson proposed to give occupancy rights to *ryots* who had held land in the same village or estate (not necessarily the same plot) continuously for 12 years, notwithstanding any contract to the contrary. Ripon, on his arrival, found fresh legislation absolutely necessary.[27] He preferred abandoning the twelve year rule. All land that was not private should be declared *raiyati* land and any *ryot*, holding or cultivating such land, should have an occupancy right therein, except one living far away from the land in question. No contract could defeat it, it could be transferred subject to the landlord's pre-emption, and the *ryot* was entitled to compensation for improvements. Sub-letting should be discouraged.[28] Here the occupancy right attached to land rather than to the individual. The Secretary of State, however, preferred Rivers Thompson's proposal, discussed above, which attached the right to the individual rather than to land and adhered to the traditional distinction between resident and non resident *ryots*.[29] Ripon's obvious reply was that while it protected the resident *ryots*, it made the position of the non-resident *ryots* more insecure.[30] Kimberley instructed Ripon to prepare

a bill embodying Rivers Thompson's plan with modifications, which was introduced in the Council by Ilbert in March, 1883.

Due to vehement opposition of the landlords, led by Maharaja Jatindra Mohan Tagore, no less than five bills were drafted and the Select Committee considerably modified the original bill in their interests. In spite of this, the Bengal Tenancy Act of 1885 (Act VIII) was no doubt a blessing to the settled *ryots*. Kimberley summarised its benefits in the following way: (1) The proof of the title to occupancy right was largely facilitated. (2) The settled *ryot* would not be able to contract himself out of his occupancy right: (3) The principle of 'judicial rent' was more firmly established. (4) The provisions of law restricting the enhancement of rent to the amount, which could be shown to be fair and equitable, were made more effective. (5) Protection was given against too frequent repetition of enhancements and of suits for arrears. (6) By substitution of the process of sale of occupancy right for that of ejectment in execution of decrees for arrears, the value of occupancy right, of improvements and of standing crops were secured to the *ryot* after arrears were liquidated. The power of distraint could no longer be used for purposes of oppression nor illicit demands, in excess of legal rent, made effective. (7) The non-occupancy *ryots* received valuable protection. They would ordinarily have a fair rent fixed by Court for a term and would be protected from eviction if they paid that rent.[31] By abolishing freedom of contract the Liberal Government of Ripon turned away from Darwinism of Argyll to the doctrine of regulation propounded by the Lawrence-Wood school.

The new approach bore fruit in other Provinces. Only one class of tenants had been given a privileged position in the first settlement of C P. They were called 'absolute occupancy tenants', paid a fixed rent during the term of settlement and were practically unejectable. The twelve year rule had been partially adopted in other cases. Now, Act IX of 1883 allowed a tenant-at-will of C.P. to purchase occupancy rights by paying a fixed sum equal to thirty months' rent, prohibited further enhancement for seven years where a tenant had agreed to one enhancement, and provided for compensation in case of eviction. The Rent Act of 1898 (C.P.) provided that the rent of ordinary tenants was to be fixed by the settlement officers for seven years and alienation of occupancy rights was to be restricted. The Act X of 1859, which applied to Agra as well as Bengal, was not formally amended in Agra, but a number of restrictions were imposed by an Act of 1901 so as to prevent the landlord from defeating its provisions.[32] The case of tenants of N W.P., neglected in 1868, was taken up. About 88% of this vast area were tenants-

at-will and competition for land enabled the *Talukdars* to use eviction as a lever for enhancement. Between 1876-82 hundreds of thousands of notices were served on them to indicate a wholesale expropriation of peasantry similar to the Tudor enclosures. Though Ripon and Lyall proposed to put a curb, Kimberley temporised and nothing was done.[33] A tenancy act was passed in the Panjāb in 1887. It defined occupancy tenants as those who, for two generations, had paid neither rent nor services to the proprietor, but only their share of government assessment. In the *Zamindari* estates of Madras every *ryot*, who possessed *raiyati* land at the time of the passing of the Estates Land Act of 1908 (modelled on the Bengal Tenancy Act of 1885), and every *ryot*, admitted by the landlord to the possession of *raiyati* land, secured a permanent right of occupancy. An Act of 1880 protected the old residential tenants of Bombay in the manner of occupancy *ryots* of Bengal.

The era of Curzon saw paternalism interfering in another sphere of agrarian relations. The problem of rural indebtedness had been attracting the anxious notice of the Government ever since the Deccan riots. The Commission appointed to enquire into their causes (1875) estimated rural indebtedness in the area to be Rs. 371 per occupant. The *ryot's* credit had gone up with their new rights and the increase of produce, and knowing not what to do with it, they had run into easy debt.[34] The Famine Commission of 1880 found that "about one-third of the landholding classes were deeply and inextricably in debt, and at least an equal proportion were in debt, though not beyond the power of recovering themselves...."[35] The Famine Commission of 1901 reported that one-fourth in Bombay had lost their lands for debt. In 1895 Sir Frederick Nicholson calculated the amount of rural indebtedness in Madras to be 45 crores.[36] The Panjāb peasants fared no better and was being forced to alienate their lands to the money-lenders, i.e. to non-cultivating classes.[37] Thorburn found that 12% of this debt was borrowed to pay land revenue. The Deccan Agriculturists' Relief Act (1879) was the first step towards relieving the peasants of this distress. Nevertheless, it had not stopped alienation, only controlled it.[38] Curzon's Punjab Land Alienation Act of 1900 followed suit. Under this Act the non-agricultural classes were not allowed to buy land from the agriculturists, nor to take it in mortgage for more than 20 years. But the measure soon led to contraction of rural credit and creation of a new class of agriculturist money-lenders.[39] Similar Acts had similar consequences in U.P. and Bombay.

Curzon failed to understand the real causes of rural indebtedness. It was not so much due to the peasant's improvidence or love

of litigation, as to exorbitant rates of interest and fraud of money-lenders, to subsistence economy and to the heavy burden of assessment. Living on fragmented farms (further fragmented as population rose),[40] devoid of cheap credit, surrounded by powerful organizations of buyers, forced to pay a high rent before harvest could be gathered and marketed, drawn into the whirlpool of world prices, he had no alternative to the local money-lender whom he perfectly knew to be a sucker. The Government's *takavi* loans, regulated by the Land Improvement Loans Act of 1883 and the Agriculturists' Loans Act of 1884, had not gone far to meet his difficulties due to paucity of funds and rigidity of administration. Sir W. Wedderburn's and Sir Raymond West's attempts to start agricultural banks were discouraged, and Sir Frederick Nicholson's plan for land-banks in Madras came to nothing. Curzon's own Co-operative Societies Act of 1904 was meant 'to encourage thrift, self-help, and co-operation among agriculturists, artisans and persons of limited means', and 'to utilise their combined savings' to remove the existing burden of debt as well as to prevent further indebtedness. But what could be their combined savings in proportion to their debts? The working capital of all the societies would not have wiped out the indebtedness of a single *taluk*. The number of co-operative societies was 12,000 during 1901-05, with a working capital of Rs. 5,48,00,000 During 1916-20, the number rose to 28,000 and capital to Rs. 11,51,80,000. Eleven and a half crores were a flash in the pan of Indian rural indebtedness which rose to £400,000,000 by a conservative estimate of 1921.[41]

The crux of the situation was the inter-agrarian relations, i.e. relations between landlords and tenants in the permanently settled areas and between the Government and *ryots* in the *ryotwari* areas, —once again, a reconsideration of the incidence of rent and assessment of revenue. Curzon was called upon to review them, when, in 1900, some retired civilians and judges, including Sir Richard Garth and Sir William Wedderburn, submitted a memorial to the Secretary of State, offering some suggestions to make the existing rules of land administration definite, clear and more helpful to the Indian peasantry. As mentioned above, they wanted five rules to be adopted, all of them long recognized to be wise[42], and some of them, once introduced, to be unfortunately discontinued later:—(1) 30 years' rule for settlements, (2) half-rental rule for assessment in areas where revenue was paid by the landlords, (3) half-net produce rule where revenue was directly paid by the cultivators (which should never exceed 1/5 of gross produce, hence also known as 1/5 gross produce rule), (4) enhancement rule, prohibiting enhancement of rent except in cases where land had increased in value (a) in consequence

of improvements in irrigation works carried on by the Government or (b) on account of a rise in the value of produce based on average prices of 30 years preceding revision, and (5) a local cess rule recommending 6¼% of rent as the fair, and 10% of revenue as the maximum, limit of local cesses.[43] The resolution of the Governor-General in Council, dated 18 January, 1902, largely the handiwork of Curzon himself, reveals the Government's views on these basic problems. The thirty years' rule, it was pointed out, was prevalent in Northern India, Madras and Bombay, but had been reduced to twenty years in C.P. and the Panjāb. The reasons of such differentiation were "much wasteland, low rents and a fluctuating cultivation" in C.P. and "rapid development of resources, owing to the construction of roads, railways or canals, to an increase of population or to a rise of prices" in the Panjāb. The Government, it was clear, was determined to lap off the unearned increment in undeveloped and developing areas. The half-rental rule, Curzon's Government held out, would be respected, but the gross produce standard (½ net or 1/5 gross produce), if systematically applied, would lead to an increase of assessments all round. It declined to abide by the enhancement rule: "To deny the right of the State to a share in any increase of value except those which could be inferred from the general table of price statistics—in itself a most fallacious and partial test—would be to surrender to a number of individuals an increment which they had not themselves earned, but which had resulted partly from the outlay of Government money on great public works, such as canals and railways, partly from the general enhancement of values produced by expanding resources, and a higher standard of civilisation". As regards the local cess rule, the Government was aware that the landlords shifted their burden to the tenants and it promised "to mitigate imposts which are made to press upon the cultivating classes more severely than the law intended".

Curzon's paternalism does not ring true. It does not vibrate with the Calvinistic fervour of John Lawrence nor asserts, with balanced dignity, the liberal humanism of Charles Wood. Years had watered both down. The weak and the underdog were now mentioned as of routine and possibly as a cloak to the Government's inability to discard opportunities of maximising revenue. He left the Bengal Tenancy Act as it was and did not care to provide for the non-occupancy *ryot*. Rent of this class in Bengal and N.W.P. could be enhanced every five years; in Awadh and C.P., every seven. The increase was limited to 6¼% in Awadh but to 33% in C.P. The rent of subordinate tenants in Bengal could be raised to an excess of 25 or even 50% over the rent paid by the tenant.[44] The landlord, in spite of the fond wishes of a century of British administrators, had not

proved improving and, though Curzon viewed him critically, he did not think of liquidating him. He had become a pure *rentier* and his breed was increasing. The effect of the policy to which Lord Curzon. gave his blessings is best seen in the state of things revealed in the statistics of the next two Census operations. For every 100 rent-receivers, the number of cultivators in the following Provinces fell from 1911 to 1921, as shown below:—

Province	1911	1921
Bengal	2,743	2,407
Bombay	1,018	1 625
C. P. & Berar... ...	6,125	3,808
Madras	2,8[illegible]0	779
N.W.F.	1,847	[illegible]
Panjāb	1,146	1,098

It was only in Assam, Bihar and Orissa, and United Provinces that the number of cultivators increased. The non-cultivating classes had been living more and more on the cultivating classes. The land-less labourers should be taken into consideration. The number of field servants and field labourers was 18,673,206 in 1891, 33,522,682 in 1901, 41,246,335 in 1911 and 37,924,917 in 1921. A comparative statistics of field-servants and field-labourers per 100 cultivators between 1911 and 1921 is given below:

Province	1911	1921
Bengal	18	19
Bihar & Orissa	47	28
Bombay	67	41
C. P & Berar	[illegible]	[illegible]
Madras	55	58
Panjab	15	12
U. P.	22	16
Assam	8	8

But the incidence of influenza of 1918 on this class accounted for some decline, and another head of the Census, viz. "labourers and workmen unspecified", should also be taken into account, for some of them must have been connected with land. There was an increase in their number by 12.4% between 1911 and 1921. The paternalistic State had done nothing for them. When it considered its task completed with self-complacence, it was merely beginning to touch the fringe of the agrarian problem.

1. Vincent Smith, *The Oxford History of India* (3rd edn.), p. 637. For the character of the Tudor gentry see R. H. Tawney, "The Rise of the Gentry", *Econ. Hist. Rev.*, IX (1941) and Trevor Roper, "The Gentry, 1540-1640', *Econ. Hist. Rev.*, Supplement. The product of the Cornwallis System never dreamt of applying capitalist methods to agriculture. He resumed leases not to farm himself but to re-settle for a higher profit. No cash crop played here as important a role as sheep-farming in England. The Bengal peasant did not evolve from a *villein*. We should not confuse him with the English customary tenant or copy-holder and certainly not with the tenant-at-will. The *pattah* has only a superficial similarity with 'Copy', but it was not conferring

any rights and privileges not possessed before, on the contrary, it curtailed them.

2 N K. Sinha, *The Economic History of Bengal*, Vol II, Chaps. VII-IX.

2a. Eric Stokes, *The English Utilitarians and India*, 1959.

3. See John Stuart Mill's famous Return to an order of the House of Commons, 9 June, 1857.

4 See pp. 821-8.

5. Mill, *Principles of Political Economy*, Bk II, Chap IX, sec 2

6 Ibid., Chap X, Sec.1. Also, Lionel Robbins, *The Theory of Economic Policy in English Classical Political Economy*, 1953.

7 See p 811

8. See pp. 928-9.

9 Wood to Canning, 18 April, 1861, No. 2, Halifax Papers, op cit, VII 184.

10. Wood to Canning, 24 April, 1861, ibid, p 188.

11. Wood to Maine, 26 January, 1863, ibid., Vol. 12, p. 52; 3 December, 1863, ibid, Vol 15, p 16, 15 February, 1864, ibid, pp. 46-48.

12. Wood to Canning, 3 July, 1861, ibid, vol. 8, p. 86

13. Wood to Elgin, 3 May, 1862, Elgin Papers, op cit. Vol 7, ff. 187-89, same to same, 9 June, 1862, ibid , f 317

14 Wood to Maine, 9 January, 1863, Halifax Papers, op. cit., XII. 14

15. Wood to Trevelyan, 8 August, 1863, ibid, Vol 13, p. 224. Wood to Maine, 25 December, 1863, ibid, Vol 15, pp 131-32

16 Wood to Maine, 30 October, 1863, ibid, Vol 14, pp. 138-40.

17 Wood to Maine, 16 August, 1864, ibid, Vol 18, pp 8-10

18 Campbell's minute, 1 June, 1864

19 Wood to Maine, 19 February, 1866, Halifax Papers, op. cit , XXII. 191-93

20 Seton Kerr, *Life of Lord Lawrence* vol II, p 423 *BPP*, No. 149, 1961

21 Argyll to Northbrook, 29 October, 1873, Northbrook Papers, C R O. p 85.

22. Ibid

23 Northbrook to Argyll, 21 September, 1873, ibid., p CLXXI

24 Argyll to Northbrook, 13 November, 1873, ibid, p 114

25 Same to same, 13 February, 1874, ibid, p 118

26 Northbrook to Argyll, 21 Novemeber, 1873, ibid, p. CXCIX

27 Ripon to Hartington, 24 March, 1882, Add. MSS 43612, No 19.

28 Despatch No 6 of 1882, 21 March 1882, *Selections from Papers relating to the Bengal Tenancy Act, 1885* (Bengal Secretariat Press, 1929), pp 1 et seq

29 Maine to Ripon, 17 August, 1882, Eden to Ripon, 17 August, 1882, Add MSS. 43552, Nos. 116A, 116B Revenue Despatch to India, 1882, No. 3

30 Despatch No 16 of 1882 17 October, 1882, *Selections*, op cit., pp 36 et seq.

31 Kimberley to Dufferin, 23 June, 1885, Legislative No 24, Dufferin Papers (in micro film), C R O.

32 Report of the U.P Banking Enquiry Committee, paras 527-528

33 Despatch of Kimberley, Revenue No 103, 13 November, 1884 (C R.O), *Selections*, 27th Series, pp 209, et seq

34 Report of the Committee on the Riots in Poona and Ahmednagar 1875, p. 49.

35 Report of the Famine Commission. 1880, Part II, Section IV

36 Report Regarding the Possibility of Introducing Land and Agricultural Banks into the Madras Presidency, Vol I, pp. 18-20 On this basis Sir Edward Maclagan arrived at Rs 300 crores as the rural debt of whole of India

37 M. L Darling, *The Punjab Peasant in Prosperity and Debt*.

38 Keatinge, *Rural Economy*, p 88

39. M. L Darling, op cit, pp 183, 210.

40 For subdivision and fragmentation of holdings in Bombay between 1901-21 see A. D. Patel, *Indian Agricultural Economics*, pp 124, 171 According to Dr. Harold Mann, the average holding in a typical Poona village was 40 acres in 1771, 14 acres in 1820-40 and 7 acres in 1914-15 *Land and Labour in a Deccan Village*, Vol. I, p. 46 For Bengal see the Floud Commission Report. 1940, Vol. I, p. 86, Vol. II, p 30. Also V.K R.V. Rao, *The National Income of British India*, 1941, p 190

41 Reports of Provincial & Central Banking Committees, 1931

42. See Munro's minute, 31 December, 1824, *Selections from the Minutes of Sir Thomas Munro*, ed A J Arbuthnot (1881), Vol. I, pp. 250-1.

43. For details of these recommendations, see p. 826

44. *Report on the Enquiry into the Rise of Prices in India*, 1914.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

GENERAL ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF THE PEOPLE

I. THE INCOME OF THE PEOPLE

The actual increase in the population of India had been slow for centuries because of the operation of Malthusian "positive checks" like famines, floods and diseases. The death-rate had often been as high as the birth-rate. Though an appreciable change in favour of rapid growth seemed to begin in the 1870's, the plagues and famines, which devastated many areas of India during the last two decades of the nineteenth century, malaria in Bengal and the epidemic influenza at the end of World War I once again restored the normal pattern.

The Census reports of the early years were not very reliable but they make the trend clear.

Census	Population (in millions)	Variation percentage since last Census
1872	206 16	..
1881	253 89	+23 2
1891	287 31	+13 2
1901	294 36	+ 2 5
1911	315 15	+ 7 1
1921	318 94	+ 1 2

Making allowances for inclusion of new areas and inaccuracies in the early returns, the real increase was calculated to be 53.8 millions between 1872 and 1921, i.e. 7 to 8% in each decade.[1]

While the Government explained the poverty of India in terms of her rising population and claimed an upward swing in the national income in spite of this drag, the nationalists challenged its statistics and denied its claim. The first rough attempt to compile the national income of British India was made in 1870 by Dadabhai Naoroji in a paper entitled "The Wants and Means of India", which he read before the East India Association. He followed it up with a more elaborate study on "Poverty of India" in 1876. Since then others have tried. But the underlying assumptions have seldom been more scientific and objective. Naoroji's charge that the British rule was responsible for India's economic ruin and the Government's defence that the *raj*, on the contrary, was contriving successfully to attain a higher national

income, were both grist to the political mill and conditioned many of the later efforts on either side. A summary view of various attempts made up to 1925 is given below:—[2]

Author	Year when attempt was made	Year for which estimates were made	Estimates of income *per capita*
			(in Rs.)
Dadabhai Naoroji	1876	1868	20
Baring and Barbour	1882	1882	27
Lord Curzon	1901	1897-98	30
William Digby	1902	1899	18
F. J. Atkinson	1908	1875	27.8
F. J. Atkinson	1908	1895	35.2

Rejecting the official figures given in the *Moral and Material Progress of India*, Naoroji added the values of agricultural produce (260 crores), meat, milk etc. (15 crores), produce of industry (15 crores), and produce of mines and commerce (17 crores), to arrive at a total of Rs. 340 crores which, divided among a population of 170 million, gave an income of Rs. 20 *per capita* for a good season.[3] But his is definitely an underestimate. He should have taken the area under each crop separately and multiplied it by its yield per acre and price, rather than apply to all the cultivable area an average annual value per acre of the principal crop and then make an allowance (of 10%) for the non-principal crops. Nor did he consider the contribution of such items as transport, public administration, professions and domestic service. V K.R.V. Rao finds the cause in Naoroji's physiocratic conception of income as something material and not something yielding utility. His figures for the produce of industry are very faulty. Making appropriate corrections Rao would arrive at a per capita income in the region of Rs. 23-24 for the year 1868,[4] which only reflects credit on Naoroji's estimates.

In 1882 Baring and Barbour estimated for that year a *per capita* income of Rs. 27, which was officially accepted. In answering to the charge of growing poverty under the British rule, Lord Curzon took their figures as his starting point and came to a conveniently comfortable conclusion. Agricultural income of British India had been estimated by the Famine Commission of 1898 at Rs. 450 crores. Assuming that non-agricultural income was half of the total agricultural income, the grand total would be Rs. 675 crores for 1897-98, which, divided among the population of India, gave a *per capita* income of Rs. 30. Compared to Baring's and Barbour's estimates for 1882, an increase of 11% had been effected in course of 15 years, an indisputable proof of economic progress under the British rule.

Digby's *"Prosperous British India"* was a caustic reply to Curzonian self-complacence. The heading of chapter XII—"The Declining Income of the Indian People"—forms the theme of his book. With an elaborate array of facts and figures he computed for 1899—

> agricultural income at £174.8 millions,
> non-agricultural income at £84 8 millions,
> and total income at £259.6 millions,

which, divided among 226.5 million people, yielded a *per capita* income of £1 15s. or Rs. 17.2 per year. As Curzon compared his estimates with Baring's and Barbour's, Digby compared his with Naoroji's and showed that income per head, far from rising, had actually declined by 15% in 30 years. Digby's was the inevitable nationalist response to the bureaucratic challenge.

Digby rejected the usual method of multiplying quantities of agricultural output by their prices and introduced a new one. "The government revenue is intended to bear a definite ratio to the assumed (or ascertained) produce of the soil reckoned over a number of years. That ratio differs in the respective presidencies and provinces. It is approximately ascertainable and I have ascertained it as nearly as may be. Possessing it, to arrive at the money value, I have multiplied the land revenue the necessary number of times and have thus reached the result I announce."[5] His friend, R C Dutt, supplied him with data on proportion of land revenue to produce, which he had compiled for his open letters to Lord Curzon on the Government's land revenue policy.

But the new method had a lesser validity than the older one. It was erroneous to assume uniformity and comparability of different provincial land revenue settlements. Secondly, the land revenue assessment ceased to be an indicator of the value of produce when prices moved up or down during the period of settlement (outside Bengal). Digby's method, therefore, could only correct or corroborate. He did not assume, like others, the value of industrial output as half of the agricultural, but he did not take the pains of calculating it item by item except in a few cases. He, too, ignored professions, Government and domestic services.

The official reply came pat in 1902 in F.G. Atkinson's *"A Statistical Review of the Income and Wealth of British India"*. He not only answered Digby's criticism of Curzon but himself made estimates for 1875 and 1895, which, in the very nature of things, could not but be exaggerated. He classified population into three sections—agricultural, non-agricultural poorer, and non-agricultural well-to-

do. We will call them sections I, II, III respectively, when comparing Atkinson's estimates for the years mentioned above.

	1875		1895	
	Population (in millions)	Income (in crores)	Population (in millions)	Income (in crores)
Section I	118.4	312 9	139 6	501 5
Section II	65 1	187.2	76 9	262 1
Section III	4.5	74	5 4	118 0
	188	574 1	221 9	876.6
per capita income		Rs. 30.5		Rs. 39.5

For section I he took the usual method of computation; for section II he worked on representative figures for wages of different occupational groups; and for section III he drew data from the civil lists and income-tax returns. But he assumed an increase of yield (by 29 lbs.) per acre between 1875 and 1895 on insufficient grounds and estimated rise of prices by 30% for food crops and 31% for other crops, while the unweighted index number of prices of exports showed a rise of 17%, and the weighted index number, a rise of 25% only.[6] He made no allowance for seeds or depreciation. In calculating the income of non-agricultural occupations, he wrongly assumed all adults above 15 as earners and included even beggars. Rao corrects his estimates and comes to a *per capita* income of Rs 31 5 instead of Rs. 39.5.

P. A. Wadia and G. N. Joshi worked out an estimate of the national income for 1913-14. They arrived at Rs. 858 crores as the net value of agricultural production, Rs 11.5 crores for mineral production, Rs. 154 crores for miscellaneous production and earnings of artisans and labourers, Rs. 145 crores for livestock and about Rs. 41 crores for manufactures. Deducting Rs. 123 crores on account of home charges, profits of foreign capital, etc., the net annual income was estimated to be Rs. 1,087,27,010 which yielded a *per capita* income of Rs. 44-5-6.

The next important study was Shah and Khambhata's *"Wealth and Taxable Capaciting of India"* (1924) which compared the pre-war period of 1900-14 with war and post-war period of 1914-22.

Items		1900-14 (crores)	1914-22 (crores)	1921-22 (crores)
Net agricultural production	...	994 8	1651.5	2097 8
Manufacture	...	80 0	150 0	186 0
Total income		1160.0	1862 0	2864 0

The *per capita* income comes to be Rs. 36 between 1900 and 1914, Rs. 58½ between 1914 and 1922 and Rs. 74 for 1921-22.

The obvious defect of this estimate was to place non-agricultural income at less than 1/9th of agricultural income, though population subsisting on the former was more than 1/3 of that subsisting on the latter. Once again the authors leave out services from computation (thus following the tradition of Naoroji and Digby) and completely eliminate income from livestock by setting off the cost of upkeep. Rao arrives at Rs. 88 rather than Rs. 74 as *per capita* income for 1921-22. Findlay Shirras includes the services and estimates non-agricultural income to be 40% of agricultural income (while Shah and Khambhata put it at 10% and Wadia and Joshi at 30%) and calculates the *per capita* income for the same year to be Rs. 107.

Thus the results of the attempts since 1876 with Rao's corrections may be tabulated as follows:

Year of Estimate	Author	Original estimate (in Rs.)	Rao's correction (in Rs.)
1868	Naoroji	20	23—24
1895	Atkinson	39 5	31.5
1921	Shah and Khambhata	74	88
1921	Findlay Shirras	107	......

Rao himself made an estimate for the years 1925-29 and arrived at an average *per capita* income of Rs. 77.9, the depression at the end of the third decade explaining the downward trend. Brought to the same price level (as obtained between 1925-29), the different views would compare in the following way:

Author	Per capita income (in Rs.)
Naoroji	44 2
Atkinson	55.0
Shah and Khambhata	78.0

Between 1868 and 1921 the *per capita* income has thus increased from a little above Rs. 44 to Rs. 78, or by about 77%. We should, however, never forget Bowley's and Robertson's caveat that the statistics, on which these computations were based, are meagre, unnecessarily diffused, gravely inexact, incomplete or misleading, while in many important fields information is almost entirely absent (as in the field of animal husbandry).[7]

Yet the fact of Indian poverty is amply borne out. India may not be growing poorer in the absolute sense as writers like Naoroji,

Digby and Dutt had been asserting, but the pace of progress was very slow (e g., 77% rise in *per capita* income in 53 years between Naoroji and Shah and Khambhata). Even more striking is the fact that Rs. 88 (Shah and Khambhata, corrected by Rao) comprised the incomes of millionaires and manual labourers alike. No reliable statistics of distribution of the national income is available. Rao breaks down the figures in the following way:

Class	Total income (crores)
Income of *Zamindars* in the permanently settled areas	81
Income of landholders of all sorts earning over Rs. 2000 a year except the *Zamindars* of permanently settled areas	109
Income of income-tax assessees earning over Rs. 2000 a year	285
	375

An upper class of 10 lakhs accounts for an income of Rs. 375 crores and it supports another 40 lakhs, at 4 persons each earner. Deducting these 50 lakhs from the population, Rao arrives at an average *per capita* income of Rs. 64.6 for the vast masses of the country. This is a very rough estimate. The upper class may have supported more people. The income-tax returns are little indication in a country where evasions are rampant. No distinction between different grades of *ryots* and tenants has been made. But even as it is, the picture is none too bright and may be very gloomy for the non-occupancy *ryot*, land-less rural labourer and the urban worker. The Indian landlord, capitalist, trader and middleclass certainly lived better than before, which may be proved from the growing imports of European luxuries and conveniences, greater consumption of sugar and tobacco, use of costlier building materials and higher educational expenses. But the affluence of a fortunate minority should not cover the abject conditions of the many. It was among them that population began to grow rapidly after 1921, and upon them the post-war slump fell more heavily. An Indian Thorold Rogers would some day reveal their real situation in terms of prices and wages. Till then we should withhold our final judgement. But the meagre information we possess is not very assuring and surely does not indicate a continuous progress. An unskilled labourer got 5s to 6s a month in Calcutta in 1788; he was getting no more than 10s in Calcutta, Delhi and Ahmedabad in 1902. A skilled labourer earned 7s 6d to 12s 6d in 1813, and 20s to 30s in 1902.[8] But, meanwhile, the prices had gone up[9] and the real wages of both remained stationary or might have risen slightly.[10]

R. C. Dutt considered excessive military expenditure, burden of a heavy India Debt and drainage of wealth from India on account of the Home Charges responsible for this poverty. The last he specially condemned: "The annual remittance of 17 millions for Home Charges, added to the remittance made by European Officers employed in India, represent nearly one-half of the nett revenues of India."[11]

The Home Charges consisted mainly of disbursements in England on account of (1) interest on debt incurred for imperial expansion in and outside India, (2) railways, the British investors in which had been guaranteed an annuity payable in England, and (3) civil and military charges including payments to the Imperial Exchequer, the Secretary of State's establishment, pensions, etc. In Dutt's view the debt was not morally due from India; the railway promoters had undertaken extravagant expenditure, which could have been avoided, and undergone unnecessary losses, which did not touch them, but from both of which they gained and the Indians lost; and as regards the civil and military charges, "it is a mean policy to make India alone pay".[12] Yet for this the taxation per head of population had risen to 4s. 8d (while, even taking Curzon's estimate, the *per capita* income was Rs. 30), no nation-building projects could be undertaken and revenue-settlements remained oppressive India was being drained of wealth and progressively impoverished Dutt's theory, known as the 'the drain theory', was not new. First propounded in Burke's famous Ninth Report (1783), it was taken up by Brooks Adams, and from R. C Dutt, who gave it a quantitative definitness, William Digby carried it on to the 20th century.

II. HOME CHARGES

A brief reference has been made above to the economic drain, known later as Home Charges, during the period of East India Company's rule.[12a] According to R. C Dutt, the Home Charges in 1901-2, amounting to more than 17 milllions sterling, may be conveniently divided into the following heads:

	Heads	£
1.	Interest on Debt and Management of Debt	8 052,410
2.	Cost of Mail Service, Telegraph lines, etc., charged to India ...	227,288
3.	Railways, State and Guaranteed (Interest and Annuities) .	6,416,378
4	Public Works (Absentee Allowances, etc)	51,214
5.	Marine Charges (including H M Ships in Indian Seas) ...	173,502
6.	Military Charges (including Pensions)	2,945,014
7.	Civil Charges (including Secretary of State's Establishment, Cooper's Hill College, Pensions, etc)	2,485,370
8.	Stores (including those for Defence Works)	2,057,934
	TOTAL ..	17,359,705[13]

There is no doubt that there are few topics connected with British administration which have evoked such a strong and nation-wide feeling, and Indians of all shades of opinion, during the last sixty or seventy years of British rule, have denounced the "Home Charges" as one of the principal causes, if not the principal cause, of the misery and poverty of the Indian people. On the other hand, most English writers have defended or justified the Home Charges on the ground that they are nothing more than remuneration for services rendered to India and interest of debts incurred by her Government. The question, therefore, requires a calm and dispassionate consideration.

In the first place, there is not, or at least should not be, much difference of opinion about the statement of R. C. Dutt that the annual remittance of 17 millions for Home Charges, added to the remittances made by European officers employed in India, represented nearly one-half of her net revenues, and this amount was annually sent out of India without any visible return. The Indians have argued that such a huge drain is sure to ruin the prosperity of any country. For, in every country the taxes collected from the people are circulated among them; they are not lost, but merely redistributed among the people. But if a considerable portion of the taxes does not find its way back to the country, so much wealth is lost for ever, and the people are impoverished to that extent. Such a view is not confined to the Indians. Several British writers have taken the same view of the economic effect of the Home Charges. Opinions of two of these writers have been quoted above.[14]

The Home Charges were born in sin. "The genesis of the 'drain' (of Indian wealth to England) is to be found mainly in the application of the territorial revenues of the Company to the provision of their investment. In other words, surplus revenue was used for the purchase of goods for export to England. India thus obtained neither goods nor bullion nor services in return for them. This system was brought to an end in 1813, when the territorial and commercial revenues of the Company were separated."[15] But the same effect was poduced by other means as noted above, and the annual drain grew by leaps and bounds, from three and a half millions in 1857 to seventeen millions in 1901-2.

If the grave evils of the system are admitted, the question next to be considered is whether these were just and necessary, or preventible, evils. In order to answer this, it is necessary to consider some important items which constituted the Home Charges.

The public debt incurred outside India may be considered first. The Indians argue that if public loans were chiefly or entirely sub-

scribed by the Indians, interest might have remained in India to fructify commerce and industry. Against this it has been questioned whether so much native capital was available. Although no definite answer can be given, it is likely to be in the negative. But it must be remembered that no serious effort was made to raise the loans in India, and it may be reasonably assumed that such an effort would have been at least partially successful.

But it is no less important to consider how far such foreign loans, admittedly injurious to India, were absolutely necessary or justified from the point of view of Indian interests. Apart from unduly excessive costliness of the Government, the main items, for which the debt was incurred, are internal wars in India, suppression of the Mutiny of 1857, and foreign wars and military expeditions sent out from India to foreign countries.

The first two of these items mean that India had herself to pay for her conquest by the British. No such charge was however levied on other countries conquered by England, for example, Canada. As England derived immense benefit and profit from her Indian dominions, equity demanded that she should pay at least a reasonable share of conquering them.

But there is a general consensus of opinion that the military expeditions sent by the Government of India outside the country throughout the nineteenth century were almost exclusively for the imperial interest of Britain, and there was absolutely no justification to charge their expenses upon Indian revenues. Wars against Afghanistan, Persia, and Tibet were caused by the rivalry between Russia and Great Britain over the extension of their imperial authority in Asia. The Burmese War was due to the expansion of imperial power and a desire to checkmate France. By no stretch of imagination can one connect in any way the interest of India with the war against China, conquest and upkeep of Malay Peninsula, the earlier military expeditions, during the Napoleonic wars, sent to Isle of France, Malacca, Java and Egypt, or the later expeditions sent against Abyssinia, Egypt (1882), Perak, and Sudan, and employment of the Indian troops at Suakim as a garrison. Lord Northbrook told the Welby Commission that "India has been hardly treated", and even Lord Curzon wrote to Cranborne on 16 November, 1901, that India "has been so flagrantly fleeced in the past".[16]

As regards Railways, R. C. Dutt observed: "For half a century the Indian railways did not pay, but were nevertheless continuously extended. The working expenses, the interest on capital spent, and the profits guaranteed to private companies, exceeded the

earnings by over 50 millions sterling—a clear loss to the Indian tax-payer."[17] The scandalous waste of Indian money on the Railways has been described above,[18] and there is no doubt that it was a heavy drain on Indian finance throughout the nineteenth century. Against this it may be pointed out that the state of things improved in the twentieth century and the Railways became paying concerns. Although there may be justifiable criticism against the principles on which new Railway lines were opened at the early stages, there is a general consensus of opinion that the Railways, taken as a whole, have been productive of great good to India.

Another item belonging to the same category was created by the Charter Act of 1833. This Act had provided that the East India Company should "discontinue and abstain from all commercial business", and at the same time had laid down that a yearly dividend of 10½ per cent. should be paid out of the revenues of India to the Company's stock-holders. These dividends on the £ 12,000,000, together with the existing Home Charges, were more than could be met from the revenues of India, and when the Company was brought to an end, the total debt had risen to £ 69,000,000. An Englishman observes:

"There has been much controversy as to whether Britain was justified in charging India with the payment of these dividends, and R. C. Dutt was expressing the general Indian view when he stated that the empire was thus transferred from the Company to the Crown, but the Indian people paid the purchase money".[19]

Next to the interest paid on foreign debt, the most important item of 'Home Charges' is constituted by Civil and Military Charges, caused by the excessive employment of high-salaried Englishmen. While the high salaries paid to them increased inordinately the cost of administration and directly or indirectly inflated the national debt, heavy pension and furlough charges, as well as the remittances by these officers to home out of the salaries, increased the bulk of the Home Charges. The political and moral effect of the practical exclusion of Indians from high administrative offices has been dealt with elsewhere. Here it is only necessary to emphasize its economic effect in the shape of drain of wealth outside. This can best be done by comparative statistics of the employment of Indians and Europeans in higher offices placed by G. K. Gokhale before the Welby Commission:

"In every department of Indian expenditure the question of agency is one of paramount importance. According to a Parliamentary return of May 1892, we have in India in the higher branches of the civil and military departments a total of 2388 officers drawing Rs. 10,000 a year and upwards, of whom only sixty are Natives of India, and even these, with the exception of such as are Judges, stop at a comparatively low level. And they are thus divided.

P.I.R.—73

	Natives	Eurasians	Europeans	In Thousands of Rupees		
				Total Salaries of Natives	Total Salaries of Eurasians	Total Salaries of Europeans
Civil department ...	55	10	1211	947	151	25,274
Military	1	1	854	12	11	18,268
Public Works	3	4	239	33	45	3,415
Incorporated local funds	1	...	9	10	...	113
Total ...	60	15	2313	1,002	207	42,070

"In addition to these the railway companies employ 105 officers, drawing Rs. 10,000 a year and more. They are all Europeans, and their total salaries come to 18 lakhs 28 thousand rupees. If we come down to officers drawing between Rs. 5000 and Rs. 10,000 a year we find that we have 421 Natives in the civil department, as against 1207 Europeans and 96 Eurasians. In the military department there are 25 Natives, as against 1699 Europeans and 22 Eurasians. In the public works department there are 85 Natives, as against 549 Europeans and 39 Eurasians. And in the incorporated local funds there are 4 Natives, as against 22 Europeans and 3 Eurasians. The total salaries of officers of this class are thus divided:—Civil Department: Natives, Rs. 2,905,000; Eurasians, Rs 650,000; and Europeans Rs. 8,830,000. In the Military Departments: Natives, Rs. 164,000; Eurasians, Rs. 139,000; and Europeans, Rs. 13,698,000. In the Public Works Department Natives, Rs. 537,000; Eurasians, Rs. 278,000; and Europeans, Rs. 3,962,000. And in the Incorparated Local Funds: Natives, Rs. 25,000; Eurasians, Rs. 17,000, and Europeans, Rs. 146,000. In addition to these there are under the railway companies, 258 officers of this class, of whom only 2 are Natives, 8 being Eurasians and 248 Europeans. Their salaries are thus divided: Natives, Rs. 12,000; Eurasians, Rs. 50,000; and Europeans, Rs. 17,100,000. In England £ 125,360 is paid as salaries by the Indian Government, and £ 54,522 by railway companies, all to Europeans The financial loss entailed by this practical monopoly by Europeans of the higher branches of the services in India is not represented by salaries only. There are besides heavy pension and furlough charges, more than three and a half millions sterling being paid to Europeans in England for the purpose in 1890".[20]

So far as civil officers are concerned, it is idle to maintain that equally qualified officers were not available in India or that the administration could not be carried on with equal efficiency, if at least half the number, gradually increasing in regular stages, of English officials were replaced by Indians.

The military charges belong to a somewhat different category. With the memory of the outbreak of 1857 fresh in their minds, the British could hardly be expected to enrol Indian officers or decrease the European element or the total strength of the army. But as years passed away, the situation changed, and recruitment of British officers and men in the Indian army in gradually diminishing proportions, and their replacement, if necessary, by Indians, was certainly a practicable proposition. The British policy of increasing the number of Indians in high civil and military services, adopted in the twentieth century, when the political situation in India was far more

unfavourable, could certainly have been initiated, with more grace and better success, in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, if the British were really concerned with the economic aspect of the question. The iniquity of charging Indian revenues with the entire expenses of the office establishment of the Secretary of State has already been referred to above.[21]

Another important item of the Home Charges was the purchase of stores. It is quite true that India was unable to supply the major part. But no attempt was made to develop Indian industry in such a way that at least a substantial part of the stores could be supplied by India.

But, apart from all the criticisms made above, a major question of principle is, how far Britain was justified in charging India with the entire cost of the civil and military administration of India. The observations of Sir George Wingate, a very high official of the Bombay Presidency, may be quoted in this connection.

"The entire cost of the Colonial Office, or in other words, the Home Government of all British Colonies and dependencies except India, as well as of their military and naval defence, is defrayed from the revenues of the United Kingdom; and it seems to be a natural inference that similar charges should be borne by this country in the case of India. But what is the fact? Not a shilling from the revenues of Great Britain has ever been expended on the military defence of our Indian Empire".

Wingate then drove his point home by reference to the case of Ceylon, which, he said,

"is properly a part of India, and was acquired in exactly the same manner as our dominions on the continent of India. In Ceylon we have British troops and local corps, as in India, but the cost of both is defrayed by Great Britain, with the aid of a limited contribution from the revenues of the island. What, then, are the reasons for this distinction?... An answer is only to be found in the accident of the Home administration of Ceylon having been transferred to the Colonial Office, while that of India remained under the East India Company, which was always treated with jealousy and distrust by Parliament and the nation".[22]

Wingate then pointed out that more than '16,000 men of the garrisons of the United Kingdom, available for any emergency that might occur in this country, are, on the trivial pretence of their belonging to depots of Indian regiments, transferred to the Indian establishment, and paid from the Indian revenues'. Moreover, India was compelled to pay for wars which were but remotely connected with her interests, and this is proved by a letter dated 6th April, 1842, in which the Chairman of the East India Company claimed that as regards the Afghan War, which had crippled the finances of India, in no view of the case can it be just or expedient that the whole charge of the operations, including that of the military re-

inforcements about to be effected, should be thrown on the Government of India.' The claim was in due course rejected.[23]

It would thus appear that the major part of the Home Charges as well as the excessive cost of the top-heavy administration in India might have been avoided if the British really felt a genuine interest in the material welfare of India.

As against this obvious conclusion, it is necessary to remember that history does not record that any nation, which conquered another country and established its supremacy over it, ever felt any genuine interest in its welfare. Most nations sought to derive as much profit from their conquered dominions as they safely could, and though there may be difference in degree, and even in kind, the exploitation of the conquered by the conqueror has been the general rule. England was no exception and does not deserve any special condemnation. "The Government of a people by itself" wrote John Stuart Mill, has a meaning and a reality, but such a thing as government of one people by another does not, and cannot exist. One people may keep another for its own use, a place to make money in, a human cattle farm for the profits of its own inhabitants."[24] It may be a matter of profound regret that human history should have been written in tears and blood, but the facts of history cannot be ignored, and no attempt should be made to explain them away by specious arguments.

Thus a class of writers place England on a somewhat different category. They set the blessings of the English rule against the evils. The general question will be discussed in another chapter. It is only necessary here to refer to the defence of the Home Charges on economic ground. It has been urged, for example, that it is not true to say that the Home Charges were payments made without any equivalent return. Such equivalents are to be found in the benefits of British rule—peace, order, law, justice, growth of new crops, trade, industry, communication, sanitation, health and education which cannot be measured in quantitative terms. The invisible exports of Britain, like banking, shipping, and insurance services, etc., should be considered before calculating a net surplus of exports from India.[25] As regards this view it may be pointed out that the benefits of the British rule should be weighed against its evils, before one can form a just idea of them. The balance that remains, together with the economic advantages, referred to above as invisible exports, will probably be found to have had very little countervailing effect, as against the heavy drain of wealth, if it be remembered that those blessings were not enjoyed by the majority—more than ninety per cent.—of the Indian people who never possessed the bare necessities of life, and

never had even two square meals a day throughout the year. Besides, from strictly economic point of view, the worth and value of the benefits and economic advantages may be best judged from the national income *per capita* in India, at the end of the nineteenth century, as compared with other nations, as shown in the following table: U.S.A.—240; Germany—225; U.K.—195; France—156; Australia—154; Canada—143; Italy—110; Russia—42; India—9.50.

The injustice and iniquity of the Home Charges become still more glaring when it is remembered that Britain, with a national income, which was more than twenty times that of India, made that country pay for her own imperial wars, thereby saddling her with a crushing national debt; realized from India every single penny spent on the establishment of the Secretary of State, though her far richer colonies were exempted from such charges which meant a perpetual drain of wealth from India to England. The very meagre national income of India could not afford to bear the huge expenses of a top-heavy European bureaucracy whose savings added to the capital-stock of Britain and the slightest fall of whose incomes from unfavourable movement of the exchange rate was met from an over-burdened Indian exchequer. Finally, a commercial policy, which pampered British trade at the cost of India, an industrial policy, which failed to protect the nascent Indian industries, and a revenue policy, which discriminated against the majority of cultivators and under-tenants, should get their share of blame for the miserable poverty of the Indian people after more than a century and half of British rule (including the Company's) in India.

III. THE POVERTY OF THE MASSES[26]

The area and population of India, according to the Census of 1901, are shown in the following tables.

British India

Provinces	Area in sq. miles	Population
1. Ajmir-Merwara	2,711	476,912
2. Andamans and Nicobars	3,188	24,649
3. Assam	56,243	6,126,343
4. Beluchistan	45,804	308,246
5. Bengal	151,185	74,744,866
6. Berar and Central Provinces	104,169	12,630,662
7. Bombay (including Aden)	123,064	18,559,561
8. Burma	236,738	10,490,624
9. Coorg	1,582	180,607
10. Madras	141,726	38,209,436
11. N. W. Frontier Province	16,466	2,125,480
12 Punjab	97,209	20,330,339
13. Agra and Oudh	107,164	47,691,782
TOTAL	1,087,249	231,899,507

Native States in India

	States and Agencies	Area in sq. miles	Population
1.	Beluchistan Agency	86,511	502,500
2.	Baroda State	8,099	1,952,692
3.	Bengal States	38,652	3,748,544
4.	Bombay States	65,761	6,908,648
5.	Central India Agency	78,772	8,628,781
6.	Central Province States	29,435	1,996,383
7.	Hyderabad State	82,698	11,141,142
8.	Kashmir State	80,900	2,905,578
9.	Madras States	9,969	4,188,086
10.	Mysore State	29,444	5,539,399
11.	Punjab States	36,532	4,424,398
12.	Rajputana Agency	127,541	9,728,301
13.	Agra and Oudh States	5,079	802,097
	TOTAL	679,393	62,461,549

As the total population of British India was nearly 232 millions, the taxation *per capita* was very nearly 4s. 8d. The income of the people of India per head was estimated by Lord Curzon at 30 rupees or 40 shillings per head, and as shown above, this is supported by modern researches which place it at about Rs. 31.5. "The economic condition of the country can be judged from the fact that the average income of the people of all classes, including the richest, is 40 shillings a year against £ 42 a year in the United Kingdom A tax of 4s. 8d. on 40 shillings is a tax of 2s. 4d. on the pound This is a crushing burden on a nation which earns very little more than its food".

In the United Kingdom "the incidence of the tax per head of a population of 42 millions is less than £. 3 10s. The proportion of this tax on the earnings of each individual inhabitant (£. 42) is only 1 s. 8d in the pound. The Indian taxpayer, who earns little more than his food, is taxed 40 per cent. more than the taxpayer of Great Britain and Ireland."

As to the wages, "the average monthly wages of able-bodied agricultural labourers in different parts of India during the last half of 1902 are shown below from official figures."

Province	District	Monthly Wages
Bengal	Patna	6s. 8d. to 8s.
	Backergunj	10s. 8d.
Agra and Oudh	Cawnpur	5s. to 6s. 8d.
	Fyzabad	2s. 6d to 5s 4d.
Punjab	Delhi	10s. 8d.
Bombay	Ahmedabad	9s. 4d.
Madras	Bellary	6s 4d.
	Salem	4s. 8d.
Central Provinces	Jabalpur	5s. 4d.
	Raipur	5s. 4d.

The following observations of R.C. Dutt, based on the figures compiled from the *Statistical Abstract*, issued in 1903, convey a fair idea of the economic condition of the people at the end of the period under review:

"Leaving out exceptionally rich districts like Backergunj, Delhi, and Ahmedabad, and exceptionally poor districts like Fyzabad, the wages of the able-bodied agricultural labourer range from 4s. 8d to 6s. 8d a month. Except in very rich district, therefore, the agricultural labourer does not get even 3d. a day; his average earnings scarcely come to 2½d. per day. ·Some deduction should be made from this, as he does not get employment all through the year; and 2d. a day therefore is more than he hopes to get throughout the year. The appalling poverty and joylessness of his life under such conditions can not be easily pictured. His hut is seldom rethatched, and affords little shelter from cold and rain; his wife is clothed in rags; his little children go without clothing. Of furniture he has none; an old blanket is quite a luxury in the cold weather; and if his children can tend cattle, or his wife can do some work to eke out his income, he considers himself happy. It is literally a fact, and not a figure of speech, that agricultural labourers and their families in India generally suffer from insufficient food from year's end to year's end. They are brought up from childhood on less nourishment than is required even in the tropics, and grow up to be a nation weak in physique, stunted in growth, easy victims to disease, plague or famine.

"Agriculturists who have lands are better off. They are better housed, better clothed, and have more sufficient food. But a severe Land Tax or rent takes away much from their earnings and falls on the labouring classes also. For where the cultivator is lightly taxed, and has more to spare, he employs more labour, and labour is better paid. In Backergunj, where the land is lightly rented and the cultivator is prosperous, the labourer employed by him gets 10s. 8d. a month. In Salem, where the land is heavily taxed, and the cultivator is poor, the labourer he employs earns 4s. 8d. a month. It is the fact which appeals strongly to the Indian economist familiar with the circumstances of his fellow-villagers; it is this fact which is ignored by the Settlement Officer when he enhances the Land Tax. A moderate Land Tax relieves the landless village labourer as much as the cultivator; a heavy Land Tax presses ultimately on the landless labourer, deprives him of work, reduces his wages, and renders him an easy victim to the first onset of famines."

The wages of unskilled labour in towns like Calcutta and Delhi, as stated above, did not exceed about 10 shillings a month, whereas the price of rice exported from Calcutta in January, 1903, was about 4s. 8d. the *maund* (82 lbs.). As the normal diet of an adult labourer, on an average, is not less than three-eighths of a *maund*, he could hardly secure even just enough food for himself, his wife and three children, as provision had to be made for scanty clothing and other necessaries of life even on the poorest scale. The addition of every child meant lack of even minimum nourishment. The same thing was true of wheat-eating area, where the labourers were forced to live on inferior food such as *Bajra*, *Jowar* and other coarse grains. A skilled labourer, like a common mason, carpenter or blacksmith earned about 20 to 30 shillings a month in towns. He could not *decently* maintain even a family of five

"There was a pressing and influential demand in England for an inquiry into the economic condition of the people of India after the recent famines (1897-1900); but the Secretary of State resisted the demand and refused the inquiry. The latest inquiry of the nature was made by Lord Dufferin's Government in 1888, but the results were never published, and were regarded as confidential".

William Digby has already published large portions of the confidential reports of 1888, which may be summed up as follows:

"In the Province of Bombay it is denied that the greater portion of the population live on insufficient food. But there are "depressed classes" all over the Province, and some of them live below the poor standard of the Indian workman's life and earnings. In the Ratnagiri District, with its miserable soil and heavy payments for land, "there was hardly a season in which this population did not endure without a murmur the hardships of a Deccan famine". Land is less fertile in the Deccan than in Gujrat, and "authorities are unanimous that many cultivators fail to get a year's supply from their land". In the Karnatic also, "the reporting authorities agree that there is a large number of cultivators who do not get a full year's supply from their lands". Even in the favoured division of Gujrat, the cultivator gets only a six or nine months' supply from his field, and most of it goes to the money-lender as soon as the harvest is reaped And "some of the numerous deaths assigned to fever are caused by bad or insufficient clothing, food, and housing".

"In the Punjab the condition of the agriculturists and labourers is no better. In Delhi Division "the diet is of distinctly inferior class, even judged by the comparatively low standard of the country" In Gurgaon District the standard of living is perilously low, herbs and berries are consumed for want of better food, and short food is the cause of migration. The extra Assistant Commissioner of Ferozepur reports that men in many villages do not get food for two meals in twenty-four hours The Assistant Commissioner of Lahore reports that a considerable number of the people are underfed. Two Mahomedan officers of Rawalpindi Division tell us a still sadder story One of them maintains that 10 per cent of the Hindu and 20 per cent of the Mahomedan population are weak and unhealthy from insufficient food; the other says that a great portion of the lower class of agriculturists belong to this category "The people of Hill Tracts in Hazara," says Colonel Waterfield, C S I, "whether agricultural or grazing, may, I think generally be called a poor, ill-grown, and underfed-looking race"

In the Central Provinces, we are told that, in Sagar, Damoh, Narasinghpur, Hoshangabad, Nimar and Nagpur Districts, "three-quarters of the tenants are reported to be in debt, and from the details which are given, it is evident that the position of a large proportion of them is one of hopeless insolvency".

Province of Agra and Oudh:—The reports of this Province are more ample and more explicit.

The Collector of Etawa writes: "The landless labourer's condition must still be regarded as by no means all that could be desired. The united earning of a man, his wife, and two children, cannot be put at more than 3 rupees (4s) a month. When prices of food grains are low or moderate, work regular, and the health of the household good, this income will enable the family to have one fairly good meal a day, to keep a thatched roof over their heads, and to buy cheap clothing and occasionally a thin blanket".

The Collector of Banda writes: "A very large number of the lower classes of the population clearly demonstrate by the poorness of their physique that they are habitually half-starved, or have been in early years exposed to the severities and trials of a famine. And it will be remembered that if any young creature be starved while growing, no amount of subsequent fattening will make up for the injury to growth".

The Collector of Ghazipur writes: "As a rule, a very large proportion of the agriculturists in a village are in debt".

The Commissioner of Fyzabad quotes Mr Bennett's statement that, "It is not till he has gone into these subjects in detail that a man can fully appreciate how terribly thin the line is which divides large masses of people from absolute nakedness and starvation". And the Commissioner adds: "I believe this remark is true of every district of Oudh, the difference between them consisting in the greater or smaller extent of the always large proportion which is permanently in this depressed and dangerous condition".

The same Commissioner wrote in the *Pioneer* that, "It has been calculated that about 60 per cent. of the entire native population are sunk in such abject poverty that, unless the small earnings of child-labour are added to the small general stock by which the family is kept alive, some members of the family would starve". As regards the impression that the greater portion of the people of India suffered from a daily insufficiency of food, he writes: "The impression is perfectly true as regards a varying, but always considerable part of the year, in the greater part of India".

"Hunger", writes the Deputy Commissioner of Rai Bareili, "as already remarked, is very much a matter of habit, and people who have felt the pinch of famine—as nearly all the poorer households must have felt it--get into the way of eating less than wealthier families."

"I believe", writes the Commissioner of Allahabad, 'there is very little between the poorer classes of people and semi-starvation; but what is the remedy'?"

These reports by British officials may be taken as the verdict writ large—one might even say the epitaph—on the British rule in India during the nineteenth century. It is hardly necessary to add, what is well known to everyone familiar with the official reports of the Government of India, that the actual state of things must have been considerably worse than what is indicated by the above reports drawn up by British officials.

1. *Census of India*, 1921, Vol. I, p 48.
2. Rao, V K R V, *The National Income of British India*, p 10
3. Naoroji, 22
4. Rao, op cit., 22
5. Digby, 531-2.
6. Rao, op cit., 32.
7. Bowley and Robertson, *A Scheme for an Economic Census of India*.
8. For comparison of prices between 1799, 1811 and 1832, see A. Tripathi, op cit., p. 265. But these refer only to the Bengal Presidency. For statistics of prices in the second half of the 19th century the Statistical Abstracts offer an incomplete guide For wages of an unskilled labourer in Bengal before 1813, see A. Tripathi, op, cit., pp 129-30; in selected areas at the beginning of the 20th century, see Dutt-II, 605-6. None of these is comprehensive and shows nothing more than a trend.

Year	Source	Area	Monthly Wages
1788	... William Cowper	Chittagong	3s
	do	.. Calcutta	.. 5s to 6s
1805	.. John Strachey	.. Mymensingh	.. 3s 9d
		. Tirhout	. 5s
		... Doab	.. 7s 6d
		... Dacca	.. 3s 6d
1812	... William Fairlie	... Bengal	... 3s to 7s 6d, when employed by natives. 7s 6d or more, when employed by Europeans 10s to 15s, when employed by planters.

Year	*Source*	*Area*	*Monthly Wages*
1902	... Government of India ...	Bengal	...
	"	... Patna	6s 8d to 8s
	"	... Buckergunge	10s 8d.
	"	... Ahmedabad	9s 4d
	"	... Madras	
	"	... Bellary ...	6s 4d
	"	Salem ..	4s 8d
	"	.. Agra & Oudh ..	
	"	... Cawnpur ...	5s to 6s 8d
	"	.. Fyzabad ...	2s 6d to 5s 4d
	"	...Delhi	10s 8d
	"	. C.P.	
	"	. Jabalpur .	5s 4d
	"	... Raipur ..	5s 4d

9.

Year	General index number for 89 articles (except *jowar*, *bajra*, barley, *ragi* and gram till 1897)	Weighted index Number (100 articles)
1861 ...	90	93
1865 ..	107	100
1870 ..	102	107
1875 ..	94	96
1880 ..	104	109
1885	87	100
1890	100	117
1895 .	104	120
1900 .	116	148
1905	110	185

The unweighted index number does not record faithfully the nature and significance of the changes in the price level. The relative importance of the commodities has changed The base year 1873 is no longer suitable. It was chosen because the depreciation of silver started from that year. Prices rose quickly after 1905 and the war forced the pace In the case of hides and skins, food grains, building materials and oilseeds the price rise was 40% or more above the base year during 1890-1912 See Report of the Price Enquiry Committee (or Datta Committee)

10 According to Dutt the rise of real wages in the rural areas before war was 38%. Vera Anstey also asserts beneficial effects of price increase on the agriculturists and the debtor class in general See *The Economic Development of India*, pp. 445 ff.

11 Dutt-II, 613.

12 Dutt-II, 605.

12a See above, pp 358-9.

13 Dutt-II, 604 The total given by Dutt is 17,368,655 But this does not tally with the figures given by him, and quoted above.

14. See pp. 358-9.

15 Griffiths, 400

16 Dutt-II, 561-2 Letters (of Curzon), British Museum, p 31.

17 Ibid, 604-5.

18 See p. 857.

19 Griffiths, 401.

20 Dutt-II, 572-4.

21 See p. 358

22 But even after India was administered by the Crown the same system continued for 90 years till the end of the British rule.

23. The statement is quoted from Griffiths, 402. For the comments of Griffiths which add nothing new, cf. pp. 403-4.

24. Quoted in Dutt-II, p. xxvii

25. This is the view of Dr. A. Tripathi, the writer of Section I of this Chapter.

26. This section is based on Dutt—II, Chapter XIV, and all the passages within quotation marks are taken from pp. 602-11.

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7. External A. Proceedings December, 1888, Nos. 61-79. Misconduct of the Senapati and the Maharaja's refusal to punish him. Measures adopted by Government

B. Documents, of which Bengali translations are given in MCR, Appendix (Only select documents are given below, though the original number has been retained) (Indicated by B. followed by serial number).

The following abbreviations are used:

GI Government of India.
CC Chief Commissioner of Assam (Mr. Quinton).
PA Political Agent of Manipur (Mr. Grimwood).
TK Tikendrajit (Senapati, later Jubraj).

6. Telegraph from CC to GI, 22 Sept. 1890.
7. Maharaja Sura-chandra's letter to TK, Sept. 23, 1890.
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9. CC to GI, 24 Sept. 1890.
10. PA to CC, 25 Sept. 1890.
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22. Petition of TK to GI against capital sentence, 25 July, 1891.
23. Sworn Affidavit of Janaki Nath Basak.
24. Sworn Affidavit of Braja Mohan Singh.
25. Letter from Maharaja (Regent) Kula-chandra to the Viceroy, dated 25 March, 1891.
32. Telegraph from Viceroy to Secretary of State, June 5, 1891.
33. India Office to GI, July 24, 1891.
35. Written Memorandum of Mr. Manmohan Ghosh.
36. The Proclamation of the Government of India, August 21, 1891.

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1817-1818	The Third Anglo-Maratha War.
	Treaties with Rajput States.
1820	New Treaty with Gaekwar.
1823	Lord Amherst Governor-General.
	Supreme Court of Judicature established at Bombay.
1824-1826	The First Burmese War.
	Various Insurrections.
1824	Barrackpur Mutiny.
1826	Fall of Bharatpur.
	New Treaty with the Bhonsle of Nagpur.
1828	Lord William Cavendish-Bentinck Governor-General.
	Inquiry into the titles of *Inam* Lands
1829	Prohibition of the *Sati*
	Rebellion of the Khasis
1829-1837	Suppression of the Thagi
1830	Annexation of Cachar.
	Rebellion of the Singphos
	Rebellion in Vizagapatam.
	Rammohan Roy visits England
1831	The Governor-General meets Ranjit Singh at Rupar.
	The Raja of Mysore deposed and the administration of Mysore taken over by the British.
	Rebellion of Titu Mir.
	The rebellion of the Kols
1833	Renewal of the Company's Charter
	Abolition of the Trading rights of the Company
	Centralisation of Legislative Power.
1834	Annexation of Coorg
	Macaulay appointed Law Member
	Formation of the Agra Province.
	Indians appointed Magistrates.
1835	Annexation of Jaintia
	Sir Charles Metcalfe, Acting Governor-General
	Education Resolution.
	Abolition of Press restrictions.
1835-6	Rebellion in Gumsur.
1836	Lord Auckland Governor-General
	North-Western Provinces (Agra) placed under a Lieutenant-Governor.
1837	Famine in North India.
1838	Tripartite Treaty between Shah Shuja, Ranjit Singh, and the English.
1839	Deposition and deportation of the Raja of Satara.
	Death of Ranjit Singh.
	New Treaty forced on the Amirs of Sindh

1839-42	The First Afghan War.
1842	Lord Ellenborough Governor-General.
1843	Conquest of Sindh.
	Military Expedition against Sindhia.
	Suppression of slavery in British India.
1844	Recall of Lord Ellenborough.
	Sir Henry (Viscount) Hardinge Governor-General.
	Rebellion in Kolhapur.
	English education declared as essential qualification for public service.
1845	The Danish possessions in India sold to the English.
1845-1846	The First Anglo-Sikh War.
1846	The rebellion of the Khonds.
1848	Lord Dalhousie Governor-General.
	Annexation of Satara.
1848-9	The Second Anglo-Sikh War.
1849	The annexation of the Panjab.
	Annexation of Sambalpur.
1852	The Second Anglo-Burmese War.
1853	Renewal of the Company's Charter.
	New Constitution of the Legislative Council.
	Annexation of Nagpur.
	Cession of Berar by the Nizam.
	Railway opened from Bombay to Thana.
	Telegraph line from Calcutta to Agra.
	Recruitment of the Covenanted Civil Service by competitive examination.
1854	Annexation of Jhansi.
1855	The Santal Insurrection.
	Treaty with Dost Muhammad.
	Abolition of the Title of the Nawab of the Carnatic.
1856	Annexation of Avadh.
	Lord Canning Governor-General.
	War with Persia.
1857	Outbreak of the Mutiny.
1858	British India placed under the direct Government of the Crown.
	The Proclamation of Queen Victoria.
1859	Withdrawal of the Doctrine of Lapse.
	Indigo disputes and riots in Bengal.
	The White Mutiny.
1860	Enactment of the Indian Penal Code.
1861	Indian Councils Act.
	Enactment of the Code of Criminal Procedure.
	The Indian High Courts Act.
	Famine in the North-Western Provinces.
1862	Lord Elgin Governor-General.
	Amalgamation of the Supreme and Sadar Courts into High Courts.

1863	Death of Dost Muhammad and Afghan War of Succession.
	Ambala Campaign.
1864	Sir John Lawrence Governor-General.
	The Bhutan War.
1865	The Orissa Famine.
	Opening of telegraphic communication with Europe.
1868	The Punjab Tenancy Act.
	Annual grant of six lakhs of Rupees to Sher Ali, Amir of Afghanistan.
	Railway opened from Ambala to Delhi.
1869	Lord Mayo Governor-General.
	Ambala Conference with Sher Ali.
1870	Lord Mayo's first Provincial settlement.
1872	Murder of Lord Mayo.
	Lord Northbrook Governor-General.
	The Kuka Revolt.
1873	The Simla Conference.
	The Bihar Famine.
	The Russians reduce Khiva.
1875	Deposition of the Gaekwar of Baroda.
	Visit of the Prince of Wales.
1876	Lord Lytton Governor-General.
	The Royal Titles Act
	Treaty with Kalat
	Famine in the Deccan.
1877	Delhi Durbar. The Queen of England proclaimed Empress of India.
	Famine in North India.
1878	Stolietoff's Mission to Kabul
	Indian troops sent to Malta.
	Outbreak of the Second Anglo-Afghan War.
	Flight of Sher Ali.
1879	Treaty of Gandammak—Murder of Cavagnari—Abdication of Yakub.
1880	Lord Ripon Governor-General.
	Battle of Maiwand Robert's March to Kandahar
	Abdur Rahman recognized as Amir of Kabul.
1881	Rendition of Mysore.
	Representative Assembly in Mysore.
	Factory Act.
1883	The Ilbert Bill.
	Famine Code
1884	Lord Dufferin Governor-General
1885	Bengal Tenancy Act.
	Bengal Local Self-Government Act.
	Third Anglo-Burmese War.
1886	Annexation of Upper Burma.
	Delimitation of Afghan Northern boundary.
1888	Lord Lansdowne Governor-General.
	Hazara punitive expedition.

1889	Abdication of the Maharaja of Kashmir.
	Second visit of the Prince of Wales.
1891	Factory Act.
	Military expedition against Manipur.
1892	Indian Councils Act.
1893	The Durand Mission to Kabul.
1894	Lord Elgin II Governor-General.
1895	The Chitral Expedition.
	Settlement of the Russo-Afghan Frontier.
1896-7	Famine all over India.
1897	Frontier Risings.
	Plague at Bombay.
	Famine Commission.
1899	Lord Curzon Governor-General.
1899-1900	Famine in Northern India.
1900	Famine Commission.
	North-West Frontier Province formed.
1901	Death of Queen Victoria.
	Habibullah becomes Amir of Afghanistan.
1904	The British expedition to Tibet.
1905	Partition of Bengal.
	Lord Minto II Governor-General.

GOVERNORS-GENERAL

I. Governors-General of Fort William in Bengal

(Regulating Act of 1773)

(Temporary and officiating in italics)

1774 (October)	Warren Hastings.
1785 (February)	*Sir John Macpherson.*
1786 (September)	Earl (Marquess) Cornwallis.
1793 (October)	Sir John Shore (Lord Teignmouth).
1798 (March)	*Sir A. Clarke.*
1798 (May)	Earl of Mornington (Marquess Wellesley).
1805 (July 30)	Marquess Cornwallis (for the second time).
1805 (October)	*Sir George Barlow.*
1807 (July)	Baron (Earl of) Minto I.
1813 (October 4)	Earl of Moira (Marquess of Hastings).
1823 (January)	*John Adam.*
1823 (August 1)	Baron (Earl) Amherst.
1828 (March)	*William Butterworth Bayley.*
1828 (July 4)	Lord William Cavendish-Bentinck.

II. Governors-General of India

(Charter Act of 1833)

1833	Lord William Cavendish-Bentinck.
1835 (March 20)	*Sir Charles (Lord) Metcalfe.*
1836 (March)	Baron (Earl of) Auckland.

1842 (February)	Baron (Earl of) Ellenborough.
1844 (June)	*William Wilberforce Bird.*
1844 (July)	Sir Henry (Viscount) Hardinge.
1848 (January)	Earl (Marquess) of Dalhousie.
1856 (February)	Viscount (Earl) Canning.

III. Governors-General and Viceroys

1858 (November 1)	Viscount (Earl) Canning.
1862 (March)	Earl of Elgin and Kincardine I.
1863 (November)	*Sir Robert Napier (Baron Napier of Magdala).*
1863 (December)	*Sir William Thomas Denison.*
1864 (January)	Sir John (Lord) Lawrence.
1869 (January)	Earl of Mayo.
1872 (February)	*Sir John Strachey.*
1872 (February)	*Lord Napier of Merchistoun.*
1872 (May)	Baron (Earl of) Northbrook.
1876 (April)	Baron (Earl of) Lytton I.
1880 (June)	Marquess of Ripon.
1884 (December)	Earl of Dufferin (Marquess of Dufferin and Ava)
1888 (December)	Marquess of Landsdowne.
1894 (January)	Earl of Elgin and Kincardine II.
1899 (January 6)	Baron (Earl) Curzon of Kedleston.
1904 (April)	*Lord Ampthill.*
1904 (December)	Baron (Earl) Curzon of Kedleston (re-appointed).
1905 (November)	Earl of Minto II.

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